

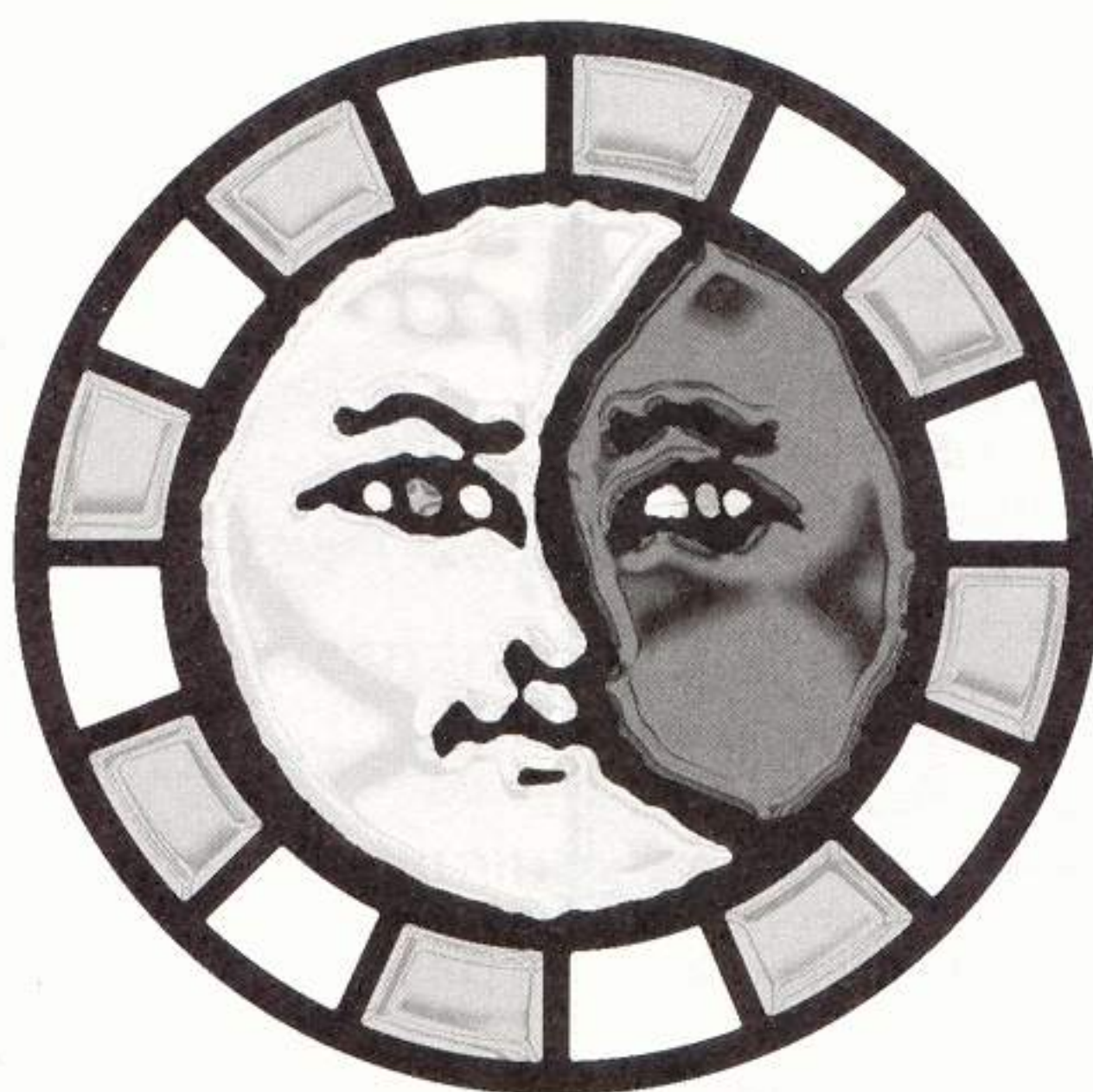
# DREAMS *and* NIGHTMARES™



For Changeling: The Dreaming™



# DREAMS *and* NIGHTMARES™



by R.S. Martin, Neil Dick and Jim Moore



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# INTRODUCTION: A GUIDE TO THE DREAMING

Magda gazed at her creation with a blend of appreciation and skepticism. It was a fine looking vehicle, to be sure, but she had her doubts. With as little time as she'd had to build the contraption with her other nocker friends, she just hoped it would hold together.

Mailanka grinned at her, his even teeth flashing brightly in contrast with his ebony skin. The eshu had a handsome smile, and Magda thought about whether or not she could sculpt a bust of him that was half as fair. Probably not, she decided.

"Well?" she asked, her coarse voice sending streamers of smoke from her cigar. "Are you planning on looking at the ship all day, or are you going to load it up properly?"

The eshu smiled again and gripped two of their bags in his muscular arms. "You've done a wonderful job, Magda. The Dreamcatcher is as fine a vessel as I've ever seen."

Magda wanted to swell with pride, but being a nocker she wouldn't allow herself the luxury. Instead, she glowered and huffed. "Save your praise until we see if the blasted thing is skyworthy. I don't want compliments on the looks of a ship, but on her performance."

The booming voice that answered her comments came from someone other than Mailanka. For a moment, Magda was afraid Bloody Nick had found them already. "If I doubted your ability, Magda, I'd have long since embarked on this quest." Magda turned to face Sven, as he hoisted a box of rations onto his shoulder. Sven grunted under the weight, which didn't surprise her; it had taken the

combined efforts of Magda, Mailanka and Dmitri the satyr to push the crate across the stone floor. "What did you put in here, Magda," Sven wheezed, "your anvil and forge?"

"No. Just the forge. I figured the anvil might be too heavy." Sven stared at her with wide eyes, until she shook her head. "I'm joking. It's extra sails and a keg of elderberry wine. The sails because you can't be too careful and the wine just because." Magda almost made a comment about waiting for Mug to show up, but she cleared her throat instead. Mumpoker Uruisig Gruaghan, Mug to his friends, was well ahead of them, wandering in the Dreaming and searching for the cure to Lady Amelia's illness.

Bloody Nick had done his work well when he cursed the Lady. Her pallor was almost as bad as a sluagh's, and her skin was even clammy. Magda had sat by her side, along with a dozen other changelings, waiting for Mug to return with the cure for what ailed Amelia. They'd already been waiting for six long days.

Magda turned away from everyone else, wanting no one to see her at the verge of tears. Mug was only a redcap, and Lady Amelia was a bit stuffy for her usual tastes, but both were Magda's friends, and she wanted to keep them around for a long, long time. Absent friends were the worst possible sort of friends to have. Amelia's only hope lay in finding the Cup of Einhorn, which could cure any poison, no matter how foul. And as for Mumpoker...well, he might just be beyond hope. Almost no one ever came back after leaving a trod. The



Dreaming was too dangerous, too unpredictable, for that.

And then there was Mortimer the sluagh. No one would have known what had happened to Mug if it hadn't been for Mortimer. Magda had never really cared for the pale changeling — until he'd proved his worth. Against all odds, he'd returned from an encounter with Bloody Nick and his gang of Unseelie fiends — only a little worse for wear, but greatly saddened at the loss of his friend Mug.

Mug was a rarity in the world, a Seelie redcap. Unfortunately for him, Bloody Nick and his bully boys were redcaps too. They considered themselves "proper" redcaps and took the idea of a Seelie member of their kith as a personal insult. When Mortimer had returned to the freehold, he'd been wounded and weak. His pale skin had been blotched with red and black bruises so deep, they looked as if he had been struck with cold iron. Despite his pain, he'd told the story of how Mug learned that Bloody Nick was behind Lady Amelia's illness: In typical fashion, the redcap had beaten the truth out of an ogre working with Bloody Nick. From what Mortimer said, that fight alone had cost Mug dearly. Still, he hadn't waited for reinforcements. He'd gone after Bloody Nick on his own. Mortimer had trailed behind Mug, barely able to keep up with the injured redcap.

It'd taken Mug half a day more to learn that Bloody Nick was in the Dreaming, anticipating the outcome of his schemes and celebrating with his cohorts. Some time ago, Amelia, by thwarting Nick's plan to frame Mug for a murder Nick had committed himself, had injured the redcap's pride. Nick had a tendency to remember past wrongs.

Mug disappeared for three days, and people began to talk. Some claimed he'd finally succumbed to his baser instincts and joined the Unseelie camp; some believed he was responsible for Amelia's illness. Even Magda had begun to question where his loyalties lay, a fact that filled her with a deep shame.

Mortimer returned around the time Lord Erin was contemplating what to do about Mug. The sluagh recounted Mug's pursuit of his own kith into the Dreaming and how a pooka in Bloody Nick's gang had convinced the redcap to leave the trod, which the pooka had claimed was a trap. Mortimer had tried to call out a warning, but his voice was too soft for Mug to hear. Before Mortimer could get closer, Bloody Nick's cronies had attacked to prevent the sluagh from warning Mug. The broken bones and wounds on Mortimer's body were mute testimony to what the redcaps had done when they'd discovered the sluagh. Only a few dozen steps away from the shimmering Silver Road, Mug had vanished from sight. Moments later, Bloody Nick himself had shown up. All Mortimer could say was that the Unseelie redcap wasn't happy with what had happened to Mug. He'd been wanting to whittle Mug down to size, and hated losing the chance to do so. While Nick roared his anger at the fools who'd let Mug fall away into the Dreaming, Mortimer had managed to make good his escape.

And now, Magda and four others, all friends of Mug's, were departing aboard a hastily built chimerical ship to find the redcap and the Cup of Einhorn.

Magda started when a hand touched her shoulder and pulled her from contemplation. The hand was strong, warm and comforting.

She'd been lost in thought. Forgetting her usually gruff façade, Magda patted Mailanka affectionately on his hand.

"We're ready to go, Magda."

"No time like the present. Let's get this show on the road." She turned and walked up the gangplank. She stepped aboard *The Dreamcatcher* and allowed herself a twinge of pride at the gentle rocking of the airborne vessel. It'd taken five nockers to build the ship so quickly, but the design was all Magda's and her pride was warranted. The sleek, elegant ship bobbed ever so slightly with her steps. "I'm glad you decided to come along, Mailanka. I've only been beyond the Near Dreaming a few times."

The eshu smiled, as an almost dazed look clouded his eyes. "I've been countless times, Magda. But it's always different. Don't count on me to guide you safely. I can't make any promises about my abilities. The Dreaming is ever-changing — and no two visits are ever the same."

Magda looked at the eshu, and at the faces beyond his. Dmitri smiled whimsically, already expecting a fabulous adventure. Sven stared out at the sky beyond the freehold, his face unreadable. Walter the boggan smiled nervously, but even his worried mind didn't stop him from polishing the wooden railing with an oiled cloth. Some things are simply second nature.

Magda forced confidence into her voice as she tried to swallow her own doubts about whether she could captain *The Dreamcatcher*. "What are we waiting for? There's people to save and sights to see. Let's be about it!"

Mailanka released the mooring ropes, and the ship began to rise into the air. The warm, scented breeze of the Near Dreaming began to fill the sails of the chimerical ship and pushed her deeper into the world of Myth.

Magda watched the dock where they'd moored the ship and the distant entrance to the freehold beyond grow smaller, and she wondered what lay ahead.

## An Introduction to the Dreaming

I just closed my eyes again  
climbed aboard the Dream Weaver's train.  
Help me to get away from my worries of the day  
help me forget today's pain  
— Gary Wright, "Dream Weaver"

When we were children, the Dreaming was always near. We knew, with complete and utter conviction, that there were monsters hiding under the bed and lurking in our closets. We knew that Santa Claus was coming to bring us gifts, even when we weren't quite as good as we should have been. We knew that Halloween would bring us candy and scares, and that, somewhere out there, the real monsters were moving through the night, waiting to catch us alone in the chill of an Autumn evening.

As we grow older, the Dreaming becomes less real. The beastie hiding in the closet is only the floorboards settling. Santa is a lovely fantasy, but he brings gifts only to children.



Halloween is a fabulous excuse for a party, a chance to throw eggs at doors or toilet-paper the home of the old biddy down the street who always scowls when she sees you...and maybe a chance to steal a kiss while pretending to be someone you forgot you were going to be when you grew up. Paychecks, taxes, bills and the remnants of half-forgotten wishes litter the road ahead of us and behind. Somewhere along the way, we forget the best parts, except when we're feeling sentimental over a lukewarm beer. The Easter Bunny isn't quite as exciting as a first kiss, and the feel of a lover's caress takes the place of a chill brought on by strange noises in the darkness.

We forget.

But the Dreaming still remembers.

Every imaginary friend a lonely child ever had wanders lost in the Dreaming and wonders just what went wrong. All of them long for a reunion with those special someones who gave their existence meaning. The personification of endless millions of fantasies are there as well: The Girl Next Door every boy pined for is in the Dreaming, perhaps keeping company with the Handsome Prince who was supposed to take some girl away from a world that no longer held the promise it had in the "the good old days" of her youth.

Every childhood fear is there. The clown doll you had

when you were seven is waiting with knowing eyes and a grin that promises secret terrors. The dog that bit you when you were five is lurking in the confectionery grasses, and he's several times bigger than you remember. The bully who took your lunch money is still waiting to collect a few debts. The faceless thing that slithered between your floorboards and scratched at your window late at night is also in the Dreaming. Then there's the shadowy form from the closet, still watching you when no one else is around.

The Dreaming remembers, and it waits with bated breath.

Just what is the Dreaming? The Dreaming is an entity created by the minds of people everywhere. The Dreaming is a realm where every wish is a reality and every fear is a certainty. It's a place that shouldn't exist but manages to be real just the same: a place powered by the minds of every living being, a world of its own, where legends still walk and demons are real. The Dreaming is the chaotic landscape of the collective unconscious, haunted by wishes for pleasure and vengeance, peopled by the stuff of myth and outlawed by the beliefs of the masses.

Mortals visit the Twilight Realm when they sleep, adding to the rich textures that exist in this irreality. But even when awake, humans can add to the power of the Dreaming. While







mortals can't consciously visit the Dreaming, their hopes, desires, dreads, and doubts all fuel the power of the Mythic Realm. Even a mortal's daydreams affect the Dreaming, though their impact is far less substantial. Mortal dreams created the Dreaming in the first place. From the first fears of lightning that our distant ancestors suffered, to the hopes that, one day, humanity may expand beyond the Earth and visit the stars, every mortal longing and fretful doubt adds to the potency of the Dreaming.

The Dreaming is a place where no human can physically set foot without assistance, despite the powerful influence human minds have upon the landscape. Much of the Dreaming changes constantly, a rough sea of turbulent, chaotic transformation without end. Here, chimera are born, often dying within seconds. The fortunate ones escape from these great Spawning Fields and move to more stable areas of the Dreaming. Some even flee into the mortal world. Although changelings have studied the Spawning Fields, they have no real concept of exactly why these areas exist.

There was a time, long ago, when the Dreaming was a part of the world and, simply by existing, it made the Earth a better place. Human rationality changed all that. There were some among the first humans who feared the unknown and sought to define what they could not explain. The world was reconfigured by written words and laws. The dragons and faeries were forced into the Dreaming. The world separated into Realms of Myth and Flesh. Changelings and mortals dwell in the world of Flesh — the mundane world, where fact is fact and fantasy is a "waste of time." The Dreaming is the world of Myth, where dreams are reality, and reality is a passing whimsy. The two worlds are asunder now, divided by beliefs and structured lives, by the conviction that dreams are only for children. This cataclysmic event was so powerful that the Dreaming itself actually shattered into smaller fragments, known to most as the Dream Realms.

But the Dreaming is hardly without power. When we sleep, we dream. And when we dream, we touch the Dreaming. There is no escape. The Dreaming is inevitable, and when in its grasp, mortals are truly powerless.

For the changelings, the Dreaming is a place of wonders remembered and revisited. The Mythic Realm is a place of power. Changelings carry a piece of the Dreaming within their very souls and are connected to this realm of fantasy in ways that mere humans can never comprehend.

The Kithain walk with one foot in the Realm of Flesh and one in the Realm of Myth. For changelings, the Dreaming is always available. They dress in clothes made of the stuff of dreams and are empowered by the Dreaming's essence. Changelings call this dream essence Glamour, and it is what sets them apart from the humans among whom they dwell. Glamour is the very energy of dreams. It is as real as the changelings want it to be, and it is their tool to use. With Glamour, Kithain can create anything, provided they understand how to use the Dreamstuff.



## Chimerical Reality

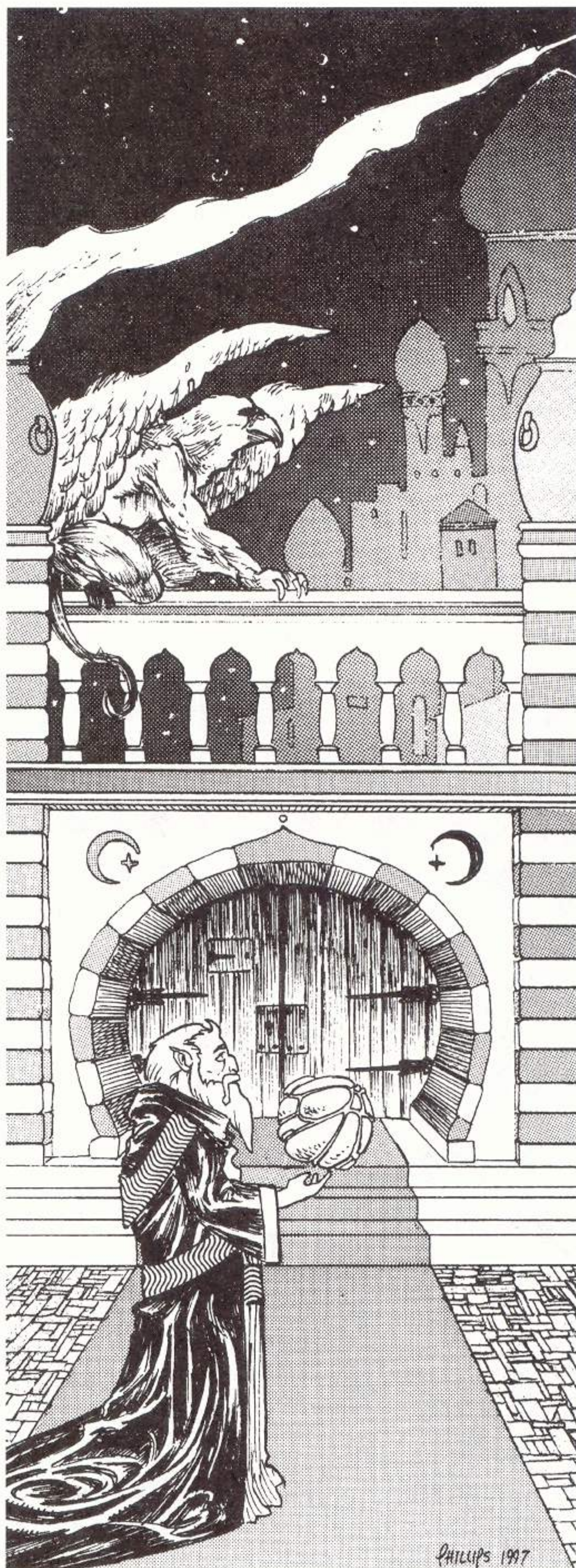
Glamour infuses every part of a changeling's life, from helping him remember his faerie nature to altering his perceptions of a world too grim for changelings to face without the aid of dreams. The world seen by changelings is actually the same world mortals see every day. The difference is simply their ability to see the chimerical trappings that are invisible to mortal eyes. Mortals see gray office buildings and traffic-jammed streets. To changelings, those same cityscapes can appear as towering castles filled with colorful wagons. A crumbling, abandoned house becomes the majestic manor home of a baron, complete with chimerical guardians. The power of Glamour is strong enough that some changelings start to suffer from the challenge of separating Myth and Flesh. They are torn by the difficulties of being stuck between their two worlds. This insanity is called Bedlam.

### Chimera

Chimerical creations are as much a staple in the lives of the Kithain as food and water. Where there are changelings, there are bound to be inventions of the imagination made real. Fantastic suits of armor that defy the laws of physics, books that speak when spoken to, elegant clothes that shimmer with hints of a thousand unguessed colors: All are a part of chimerical reality for the Kithain. These items are real only for beings who can sense and experience the Dreaming and its power. But for those rare and precious few, the items are very real indeed. What is commonly perceived as a simple station wagon can easily become a chariot of gold with wheels of fire in the hands of a skilled Dreamsmith.

Weapons of fantastic capability are crafted from Dreamstuff and powered by Glamour. Legendary weapons from history remain lost to the real world, but they still exist within the depths of the Dreaming. Chimerical swords capable of cleaving steel and arrows sharp enough to pierce a dragon's heart are available to the changelings. Wonders await all who have the eyes to see them and the courage to defy Banality and touch them.

Chimerical creatures are entities in their own right, capable of feelings and thoughts both vile and pure. In most cases, chimera live in the Dreaming, where they can dwell for all eternity. Whether brought about by someone's wishes or simply having existed for countless eons, chimera are a part of the Dreaming and, thus, of every changeling's world. Sometimes, perhaps because they've grown too curious or because they seek the forbidden fruit of the mortal world, chimera fight through the Mists of Forgetfulness that separate Flesh and Myth, and are born again in the world they once knew — or the world they've simply longed to know. Once here, they must maintain the Glamour that gives them flesh by feeding on the stuff of dreams, lest they fade into nothingness. Their struggle to survive is as primal as that of anyone who suddenly finds herself drowning in a dark pool of water: Chimera will do anything to continue breathing, even if it sometimes means they must kill.





## Dreamers and the Dreaming

The Dreaming is alive, make no mistake about that. But the life it has is not quite like anything else in existence. The Dreaming is not sentient, nor can it ever become sentient. Instead, it is a primal pool of emotions. All colors, tastes, sounds and scents are more intense in the Mythic Realm, and so are feelings. Anger is intensified, and here it is a raging inferno, rather than a candle's flame.

There are no restraints on people when they dream, and waking fantasies are also without limit. Anything is possible, and nothing is sacred. Dreamers can't control what occurs in their slumber, though many have tried. Their preconceived notions of self-control are useless while they sleep, and even the most restrained of them has no choice but to surrender to the chaos of dreams.

The very liberation of Dreamers' minds is the truest force of the Dreaming. It is the source of all power for the Dreaming and one reason for the Dreaming's constant state of metamorphosis. There are very few stable locations within the Dream Realms; most of what a changeling sees there on one visit is either gone or has moved to another location by the time she passes through again. The main reason for this flux is that

dreams change over time: not only the ambitions and fears of Dreamers, but the very things of which they dream.

During certain times of the year — especially in the Near Dreaming — the thoughts of sleeping humans turn toward special holidays, such as Christmas and Halloween (to choose two Western examples). In any part of the world, as human minds drift closer to such special occasions, certain aspects of the Near Dreaming become flavored by the approaching holiday. Many Kithain enjoy chimerical fireworks in the Dreaming as the celebration of Independence Day nears. By the same token, many childlings take special pleasure from entering the Near Dreaming as Christmas approaches, because they know that Santa Claus often leaves packages filled with wonderful chimerical creations. (Grumps often give warnings about such toys, many of which have a life of their own, and not all of them are user friendly. Parental anxieties about whether or not a toy is safe for a child to play with have lately led to rather serious problems in the Dreaming.) Valentine's Day, in the Dreaming, is a favored time for satyrs everywhere, for obvious enough reasons. Halloween is always interesting in the Near Dreaming, and many a sidhe knight goes hunting for chimerical monsters spawned as Samhain draws closer. In every season, there are special occasions, and for every occasion, there is a least one





unusual and repetitive occurrence in the Near Dreaming. In this way, Dreamers actually have an influence over the Dreaming, though they are (for the most part) entirely unaware that the realm even exists.

## The Dreams of Children

Children occasionally catch glimpses of chimerical reality at the age before “rational thinking” interferes. True, youngsters can seldom communicate their Dreaming experiences clearly enough to make their doting parents aware of these “visions,” but they do sometimes see the Dreaming. Their dreams also have a more profound impact on the Near Dreaming than other humans’ dreams. Anxieties and hopes are usually far more primal for children than they are for adults. Young minds are unencumbered by the realities of the mundane, and Banality hasn’t yet managed to take hold in their hearts and minds. Some believe that children are a primary reason for the chaotic changes that take place in the Dreaming, whenever the shimmering Firchlís rushes through the Mythic Realms and shifts everything around, warping the Dreamscape. The Firchlís alters most things there, but some remain the same, regardless of the sudden changes. There are almost always things of beauty in even the darkest parts of the Dreaming, because children still believe in miracles. There are always unpleasant surprises in even the most fabulous places within the Mythic World, because every child has a special fear of the unknown.

## The Dreaming and the Insane

There are those mortal minds that simply can’t take the pressures of the mundane world, and sometimes, during the course of life, these minds twist and fragment. The lives of the insane are a perpetual torment of fantasy pleasures and imaginary pains, of biting rage and deep depression. Just as with children, the insane have a powerful effect on the Near Dreaming. When clustered together in asylums, they can have an especially terrifying impact on the Mythic World: The most dangerous of chimera often frequent areas where the mad are gathered. Creatures of unspeakable rage are formed from their dreams, and these beasts are often more feral than redcaps on a rampage. Most disturbing of all, these chimera typically seek wandering Kithain, are drawn to them, in fact, like moths to flame. Many have wondered why chimerical monsters created by the insane are so fascinated by changelings, but no solid answers have ever come forth, as these chimera seldom bother to explain themselves before attacking. The most commonly held belief is that the beasts seek to destroy the inherent childlike qualities of changelings, something the chimera themselves can’t achieve. Another common theory is that knowledge of the Dreaming and of changelings is what drove some of these mortals’ over the edge, and this sort of lashing out is an attempt at retribution. Whatever the case, most Kithain tend to avoid areas of the Near Dreaming where the mad have influence.

## Changelings and Dreams

Many believe the Kithain have their origins in the dreams of mortals, that the fae were birthed from early desires and fears, when the world was still young. Perhaps for that reason, they

are connected to the Dreaming, but not necessarily to dreams themselves. It’s not uncommon for a changeling in the Dreaming to come in contact with an actual manifestation of a sleeping mortal’s dream. People who are heavily stressed or are feeling particularly powerful emotions can have their dreams manifest completely. Although a few very gifted fae can influence the dreams of sleeping humans — can actually control dreams and change their course — they are exceedingly rare.

However, while in the Dreaming, changelings can take what they desire from a mortal dream in the form of chimerical items. If, while passing through a dream, a changeling should happen upon an elegant cloak or a sword, it takes nothing more than the slightest effort for him to reach out and retrieve the item he sees. This action has absolutely no effect on the dream itself, and even though the Kithain might now hold the cloak in his hand, the cloak in the dream remains unaltered. This ability even extends to sentient parts of dreams, but the risks are extreme when pulling a person from a dream into the Dreaming proper. Because dreams tend to change, and the “roles” of people in dreams change too, what appeared, at first, to be an innocent young lovely for a satyr to woo can easily become a multitentacled chimera with a serious attitude problem, should a pleasant dream become a nightmare.

Any objects a changeling takes from a dream remain solid and real, so long as they remain in the Dreaming. Leaving the Dreaming means losing items she’s chosen as her own, unless she invests them with her own Glamour to maintain their solidity in the Flesh World.

## Stable Points in the Dreaming

There are places in the Dreaming that simply don’t change in any noticeable ways. Most often, these stable points are found in the Near Dreaming and are situated in areas where cities, towns and freeholds exist. Changes do take place in these areas but are seldom major. The transformations are so small and so slow that few ever notice them. Most of these areas are connected, even today, by trods.

## Spawning Fields

Spawning Fields are dangerous places under the best of circumstances. These chaotic oceans of pure Glamour are direct, one-way connections between the Dreaming and the mortal world. Chimera are born constantly within these fountains of power and often die quickly. Spawning Fields appear seemingly at random within the Near Dreaming and vanish just as capriciously.

Some changelings speculate that Spawning Fields may be direct conduits to Arcadia. A few have even tried entering these places in the hopes of finding a way to return to the faerie homeland, but most who follow this route never return, and the ones who do are drastically altered. Exactly what the energies of the Spawning Fields do to changelings remains a mystery; however, it is known that these forces somehow “burn away” changelings’ mortal seemings, which leaves them little more



than sentient chimera, unable ever to leave the Dreaming.

## Banality and the Dreaming

The Dreaming is the antithesis of Banality. Changelings who've spent too much time among humans and are suffering from Banality often enter the Dreaming in order to cleanse themselves of their accumulated Banality. The good news is, it works. After a short time in the Dreaming, Banality fades from the Kithain. The bad news is, it sometimes works too well. Extended stays in the Dreaming can lead to Bedlam.

The very essence of the Dreaming extinguishes the darkness of Banality. Banality simply can't exist for very long within the overwhelming influence of the Mythic Realms. However, while it exists, changelings under its influence can have unusual effects on the Dreaming. Trods weaken in their presence, as do chimera.

The Dreaming typically responds to Banality as the human body does to a cancer or infection. While the Dreaming's most common response to Banality is simply to make it more difficult for the changeling to enter the Mythic Realm, in some extreme cases, the Dreaming sends powerful chimera to attack the banal target — much like the way the human body sends white blood cells to fight off invaders. Sometimes, the Dreaming itself responds, turning pleasant landscapes into frightening nightmare realities filled with gale force winds and torrential rains, hail the size of trolls' heads and lightning that incinerates whatever it touches. Unfortunately, the Dreaming is not very discriminating in its attacks, and anyone around the banal target is likely to suffer its ire as well.

## Cold Iron

Cold Iron cannot, under normal circumstances, enter the Dreaming. Most Kithain would never consider even trying to bring this banal material with them into the Dreaming, as they understand that the effect on their one refuge from the mundane world could be extremely damaging.

There is one recorded exception: Toward the end of World War One, a French Dauntain, convinced that bringing iron into the Dreaming would end the scourge that had ruined his life, managed to smuggle an iron crowbar into the Dreaming through means unknown. The effects were immediate. The Near Dreaming around Versailles, where the hapless fool executed his plan, was vaporized, and throughout the Mythic Realms, storms the likes of which the Dreaming had never experienced exploded into existence. The backlash from the contact obliterated more than a dozen freeholds in France and other parts of Europe, as well as everyone inhabiting those holds. The Dauntain, too, was destroyed. If he has ever incarnated again, no one knows of it. Incidentally, the iron crowbar was forcibly expelled back into the world of Flesh and has since become a much coveted talisman among certain groups of Dauntain. Some blame several new sleeping disorders on the Dauntain and his crowbar. His name remains unknown, else it would surely be used in stories to frighten childlings.

## The Dreaming's Effect on Banality

Banality is the contraposition of the Dreaming. When the two meet, something has to give. While in the Dreaming, the something that normally fades, at least in the case of changelings, is Banality.

Over the course of time, the Dreaming cleanses a Kithain's body of Banality. This process is a slow one, though changelings notice the difference almost immediately. For every day a changeling spends in the Dreaming, he loses one temporary point of Banality, up to 9 points. After that, the loss of Banality becomes a much slower process.

Banality seems to build a resistance to the Dreaming's purifying effects. A permanent point of Banality takes no less than a year before it begins to fade. Once broken down, however, the remaining temporary points drop away at a rate of one per month.

The next permanent point won't be affected by the Dreaming until a full five years are spent in the Dreaming, after which the remaining temporary points fade at a rate of one per year. The next permanent point takes 10 years in the Dreaming, and so on.

Banality is inevitable, but its influence is weakened while in the Dreaming. However, even being in the Dreaming isn't enough to remove all Banality from a character. No matter how low a character's Banality drops, the effects of the Dreaming cannot reduce her Banality to nothing. There always remains the seed of Banality, a dark shadow that flickers in the heart of the changeling.

Only extremely powerful items or the most grueling quests can remove the final traces of Banality from a changeling. (See the **Immortal Eyes** trilogy of fiction or the adventures by the same name for details on one artifact powerful enough to remove all traces of Banality from a character). The effects of so many lifetimes away from the Mythic Realm are hard to erase.

While the Mists of Forgetfulness do aid in cleansing mortals of their Banality, the effects on humans last only as long as the individual is within the Dreaming. Once separated from the Mythic World and the Mists' influences, all Banality accrued by a human returns to him.

## The Mists of Forgetfulness

The Dreaming protects Itself. Whereas the waking world is altered by the will of humans, the Dreaming refuses to suffer the same fate. Once, long ago, the Shattering caused irreparable harm to the Mythic Realm. The damage occurred because the Dreaming simply couldn't conceive of the Shattering or its consequences. Since that time, the Dreaming has learned from its mistakes. Immediately after the separation of Myth and Flesh, the Dreaming created the Mists: a barrier that continues





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to grow stronger as the centuries pass. These walls of heavy fog serve as a buffer between the Dreaming and the waking world. They shelter the Dreaming from undue influences and protect it from all who would intrude. The Mists, simply put, numb the mind of anyone who could cause the Dreaming serious harm.

More than just a way to erase the memories of trespassers, the Mists of Forgetfulness are a powerful defense against Banality. All who breathe the Mists, or even feel the Mists touch their flesh, absorb the Dreaming's energies. Those energies dampen a mind's disbelief in the fantastic and make it more prone to accept what it perceives. The process starts as soon as a mortal or Kithain enters the Dreaming; the deeper one travels into the Mythic Realm, the more profound are the effects. For mortals, this effect is reversed upon leaving the Dreaming. For the Kithain, who are a part of the Dreaming in ways far beyond mortal comprehension, the benefits remain.

But the Mists of Forgetfulness work in both directions. Just as they shield a changeling from Banality, they remove the memories of the Deep and Far Dreaming, protecting from any possible human influence the most powerful aspects of the realm.

As the Dreaming protects itself, it also protects the Kithain. Changelings who enter the Mythic Realm beyond the Near

Dreaming are granted back a part of themselves that is locked away while they dwell in the mundane world. Changelings become more fae and less mortal the deeper into the Dreaming they journey, and as they leave they once again lose those aspects that would surely be crushed by the mortal world's Banality. The process simply inverts the one whereby the longer she remains apart from the influences of Glamour, the more she becomes a mere mortal.

## Otherwhere

Some changelings believe they understand the cosmos in all its glory. They believe that the universe and all its dimensions are laid out in ways that don't quite mesh with what other supernaturals believe is accurate. The descriptions below reflect what the Kithain believe is the truth. Mages, wraiths and Garou would scoff at these concepts. In truth, all the supernaturals are partially right, and they are all partially ignorant of the greater truths and mysteries of the universe.

More than merely to separate the Mythic from the Flesh, the Shattering actually broke the Mythic into countless pieces. Some of these fragments are little more than wisps of dream





that flicker and fade. Other fragments are far more stable, and large enough to hold entire continents. Each moves at its own pace, gradually flowing across the face of the spirit realms, which the other supernaturals call the Umbrae. This constant shifting motion is one of the main causes of the Firchlis, and it is something that few changelings understand.

The Dreaming exists in a place that is beyond standard space and time, where it floats like islands of reality or bubbles of creation. Where these bubbles drift, the Dreaming is as real and solid as it needs to be. But there are dangers beyond the chimerical in the Dreaming.

The Dreaming appears whole. Seen from above, from the vantage of the clouds, the Dreaming seems to stretch forever. In fact, it does stretch for eternity, but eternity doesn't notice the great holes in the Dreaming's patterns. The spaces between the "bubbles" that form the whole of the Dreaming are painted over, and seem as real and solid as the rest of the Mythic Realm, because a tension exists that stops the Dreaming from spilling apart and fragmenting even more. That tension is created by the trods. Trods truly are the arteries of the Dreaming. Without them, the Dreaming would drift further and further apart, and each island of Dreamstuff would break into tinier fragments until there was nothing left.

The Dreaming was wounded by the Shattering, but it nevertheless remains a vital entity. The trods connect every fragment of the Dreaming, no matter how small, and protect changelings who walk along the Silver Path from stepping into the spaces between islands of Dreamstuff. These great holes in the Dreaming are filled with tinier islands of Dreamstuff, and are solid enough for most chimera to travel without fear of injury. But changelings and mortals who walk the Dreaming and ignore the trods face a terrifying threat. They risk stepping into the Otherwhere, the place between the Dreamstuff bubbles. The Otherwhere is a place that exists between the Flesh, the Mythic and the Umbrae. Here, no one can control what happens and *truly* anything is possible. Changelings and chimera alike have fallen into this great void between worlds, and few ever return.

In the strange arena of the Otherwhere, there is enough residue of the Dreaming to survive, but there are taints from the Other Places as well. Great devouring things move through the colorless landscape, where they battle against spiderlike entities the size of the moon. Wild storms of raw, primal power rampage across the Otherwhere, create random wonders and destroy the webs of the spider-things, even as the great devourers come to feed on them. The cycle is endless and frantic, and this ceaseless war recreates the shape of the Otherwhere constantly. Nothing remains for long. The Dreamstuff that falls here is an anchor for the chimera and changelings, but it's not enough to guarantee their safety. Surely, it's not enough to protect their sanity, either.

From time to time, things come back from the Otherwhere, things resembling the Kithain and chimera who have fallen into the great void, but they are things changed, reverted into something more primordial. Some resemble the fomorians of



old, some bring to mind the legends of the Tuatha de Danaan. All are either too hideous to bear or so incredibly beautiful that merely looking at them blinds the viewer. Although these primal beings can walk across the surface of the Dreaming, they seem unable truly to touch the Mythic Realm. The Dreaming protects itself and immediately surrounds these oddities with the Mists, thus shielding from the mind of anyone unfortunate enough to see them any memory of such creatures. The things that crawl from the Otherwhere are sometimes seen but are never recalled as more than a flickering memory of something incredible.

No one is quite certain just what these creatures do, or where they go or even why they exist. Some claim that these powerful beings come into existence as an effort by the universe to right itself, that they are part of a healing process slowly mending what the Shattering sundered. Others believe they are a continuing part of the Shattering, of a gradual slipping away of the universe that heralds Winter's approach. In the end, all the guesses and theories are for naught. Whatever their purpose, if indeed they serve any purpose, it is beyond the minds of Kithain or mortals to comprehend.

## The Umbrae

There are other areas beyond the Dreaming, places where werewolves, wraiths and mages move freely. These places bear different names, but together they are referred to as the Umbra. Although these places are not the same as the Dreaming, all are connected nonetheless. There are three Umbrae, each broken into three regions.

### The High Umbra

The first Umbra, which changelings call the High Umbra, is known to mages. In this place, the mortal wizards have learned to alter reality without fear of reprisal. For mortals, the High Umbra is much like the Dreaming. Here, they can do amazing things, if they know how to free themselves from their usual limitations.

Within the High Umbra, its Near Umbra is closest to the world changelings share with mortals. Much like the Dreaming, the Near Umbra reflects the shapes of the Flesh Realm. Likewise, here mages are freed from the restraints that hold back their powers in the mundane world. Mages often create homes for themselves within the Near Umbra for easy access to its power and freedom. The Near Umbra's proximity to their mortal homes also allows them certain creature comforts. The mages' homes here are much like freeholds and are called Horizon Realms. Mages who can construct such domiciles are powerful indeed, for they can shape these Horizon Realms to suit their every desire and even change the laws of physics within them. With that knowledge in mind, few of the Kithain ever bother even to try entering the High Umbra. The Hidden Ones — the banal mages — have places of their own here, and their powers are too terrifying to confront.

The Far Umbra, the High Umbral region that closely

mirrors certain aspects of the Far Dreaming, is next. The Far Umbra's major difference is a physical barrier that separates it from the Near Umbra, an area called the Horizon. This area is where most mages build their Horizon Realms, and it is possibly the place where their powers are greatest.

Last is the Deep Umbra, a place where even mages fear to dwell for long. Great beings, nearly godlike in their abilities, are imprisoned here, held by the very same power that caused the Shattering. Little is understood about these entities, though most changelings suspect such beings are little more than truly powerful chimera. As evidence, most truly knowledgeable Kithain point to trods that reach from the Nightmare Realms into the Deep Umbral area of the High Umbra.

### The Middle Umbra

The Middle Umbra is the spiritual reflection of the mundane world. However, it stretches far beyond the limits of Earth: The very stars in the evening sky are also found in the Middle Umbra, if what the Kithain hear is true. Like the High Umbra, the Middle Umbra is three-tiered, though it is a place less structured than the mages' domain.

### The Near Umbra

Also called the Penumbra by the Garou, this realm once again reflects the world of Flesh — or the Gaia Realm, if one wishes to use werewolf terms. The Penumbra differs from the Flesh Realm only in that the spirits of the world can be seen by visitors to the Near Umbra. Wyld spirits, Weaver spirits — the ones responsible for the Shattering, at least according to the Garou — and even the Wyrms spirits of the Dead are all visible within the Penumbra. Houses and cities can be seen, within this area, actually to be crafted from Weaver spirits and the threads they continuously build. Areas where humans haven't yet claimed the world are normally occupied by Wyld spirits, and Wyrms spirits exist wherever death dwells.

All in all, the Kithain prefer the idea of leaving this area to the Garou. To fae, it sounds too much like the Nightmare Realms.

### The Far Umbra

The Far Umbra here is much like the Far Umbra of the mages. There are *things* here that are simply best not explored. According to the Garou, the greatest of the chimera — called Incarnae — dwell here, fighting an unending war to dominate each other. The Banality of some places in this realm is too great for most changelings willingly to risk visits.

### The Deep Umbra

Here, the similarities between the Dreaming and the Umbra are strongest. Chimera wander among the stars, traveling upon trods of moonlight and moving between worlds. Spirits exist here as well, Weaver, Wyld and Wyrms alike, though they are more scarce. The Deep Umbra is much like outer space, though it apparently has an atmosphere, as the interplanetary void once did in the Flesh Realm, before the



Shattering. Many Kithain scholars incorporate this fact into their arcane theories that the shapechangers were once a branch of the fae who managed to survive the Sundering by different means. Some of the more adventurous Kithain have traveled even here, though they normally seem to arrive deep in the Middle Umbra by accident.

## The Low Umbra

The Low Umbra is a place of endless woe and mystery. Even the Kithain occasionally find themselves in this place, straying from the cycle of rebirth that is the final blessing of all changelings. Some believe that the souls of Kithain murdered with cold iron end up in the Low Umbra. The sluagh might know more, but if so, they aren't sharing the information.

Three levels of the Low Umbra are known to exist: the Shadowlands, the Tempest and the Far Shores.

### The Shadowlands

In this dark, dismal place, the Dead who can still reach out to the world of Flesh mourn their own deaths and scheme to haunt the living. Ghosts and other, darker things dwell here, seeking retribution against the living and slowly killing the world. It's said that a wraith standing in the Shadowlands can look upon mortals and know when they will die. Much like the Near Umbras of the other Umbrae, this place reflects the mundane world. The difference here is that the reflection is not of what is, but of what was and what will be. It's believed that some sluagh can enter this place and return unscathed. It is known that they surely talk with the Dead.

### The Tempest

The Tempest is the second area of the Low Umbra and is a place of constant, hideous storms. There are trods through this area, just as there are through the other Umbrae. Only the Dead travel these trods, and most Kithain are satisfied to leave it that way. Death spirits roam throughout the Tempest, doing all they can to destroy completely any of the Restless who have not yet moved on. Ironically, the greatest seats of power in the Low Umbra are also located here, buried in the constant storms. Stygia is the foremost of the death domains, and the wraiths who dwell in Stygia prefer what they have to trying their chances at life again.

### The Far Shores

The Far Shores closely resemble Arcadia. On these islands, according to the Dead, all dreams of Paradise, or of Hell, come true. Despite this knowledge, few wraiths ever journey there, just in case they're mistaken. Most changelings are not curious enough to find out, and even the sluagh know of no paths leading to these distant places.

## The Paths of Balor

There are other roads in the Dreaming. These strange pathways often lead nowhere, though a good number actually can lead to the Umbrae. The Kithain call these roads the Paths

of Balor, for each leads into a different sort of darkness. Most importantly, each is a one-way path. Once a changeling passes between the Dreaming and the Umbrae, the pathway disappears. All who travel these courses must wander until they can find another path that leads them back to the Dreaming — instead of to another Umbra. Like the trods, the Paths of Balor shift and change with the geography of the Dreaming.

### The Black Paths of Balor

These paths lead only to the Shadowlands. They are feared by all but the most foolhardy and, perhaps, the sluagh. The roads between the Shadowlands and the Dreaming are scarce, and most originate in the Far Dreaming. But there are still changelings who manage to follow the trails leading from the Dreaming to the Low Umbra and fail to find their way back until it's far too late. For some, death is the sole punishment, but for the truly unfortunate, change is the fate that awaits. The bean sidhe, for example, met a fate far worse than mere death. Theirs is an agony that is surely a hundred times worse than the touch of cold iron. Locked between life and death, they suffer for what promises to be an eternity, and they often take others down with them. The bean sidhe should be pitied, but feared as well.

Oddly, this fate seems to befall only the noblest, bravest Kithain.

### The Green Paths of Balor

The paths to the Middle Umbra, much like the roads to the Shadowlands, are rare. They are most commonly found in the Deep Dreaming, though a few others may exist elsewhere as well. On these dark-emerald trods, changelings can find secrets never meant for them and truths that can alter their lives forever. Some believe, and rightly so, that these roads most often lead to the havens of the fomorians. Among the sidhe, a growing faction believes that some of the fomorians escaped fae wrath by running from the Dreaming into the Middle Umbra, where they now dwell in the hellish domain of the creature called the Wurm. These beings, much like chimera, supposedly take over willing victims and become the creatures the Garou call simply fomori.

There are alleged wonders and treasures for the finding, if one merely walks the Emerald Trods. Each Kithain must decide whether the risks are worth the rewards. If the fomorians truly do wait on the other side, it's a good thing that few are foolish enough to travel the Green Paths of Balor.

### The Golden Paths of Balor

The Golden Paths of Balor are supposed to lead to the High Umbra, where gods and mortal mages roam at will, and nothing is as it should be. Some claim the Tuatha de Danaan have moved beyond the Dreaming and taken up residence in the High Umbra to wait for a time when Winter's shadow has left the mortal world. The banal mages have homes in the High Umbra, and there they have powers as great as the most powerful Kithain sorcerers'. None who fear for their lives take these paths. Only the young and the foolish, often one and the



same, are bold enough to enter the High Umbra. Most who return from it have been driven mad by what they encountered. As with other Paths of Balor, the Golden Trods usually have their start in the Deep Dreaming.

## Travel in the Dreaming

According to the eshu, there are a thousand ways to travel through the Dreaming. Horses are fairly common, as chimerical steeds can be easily summoned, provided one knows the proper rituals for calling them.... Of all the nonmythic chimera, horses are, perhaps paradoxically, the most plentiful. Every freehold has horses, and many are found in the wilds not far from the trods. Of course, these latter chimera must be watched carefully, for they often take seductive shapes to lure the unwary.

Walking is the most common form of travel in the Dreaming, aside from riding on the backs of equines. Because trods often fall into disrepair or haphazardly grow thin in the Dreaming's deeps, changelings sometimes prefer to trust their own feet, rather than any beast's hooves. Eshu, redcaps, satyrs, pooka and trolls are all just as comfortable walking as they are riding. Only the sidhe, the boggans and the nockers nearly always seem to need a form of conveyance. With the nockers, a horse and wagon are often required, if only to carry their supplies. With the boggans, the problem seems to be keeping up with the other Kithain, which is a challenge under even the best circumstances. Some claim the boggans need to be on horses anyway, else they'd be stopping every dozen feet to clean the trods of any debris and forever delaying their motleys. The sidhe seem to feel most comfortable on the backs of their steeds.

Chimerical vehicles of every imaginable sort often follow the trods. Everything, from horse-drawn buggies to massive war engines, is available to fae adept at shaping Dreamstuff. Unseelie nockers seem to like the idea of a war engine, as they prefer to blast their way past any obstacles in their path.

Ships designed to sail the roughest seas are often seen in the Dreaming, seeking faster passage to distant lands and the areas beyond Concordia's roads. It's surely wisest to build a stout ship for traversal of the Seas of Dream, as there are most definitely sea monsters in those waters.

During the last hundred years, changelings have begun traveling by air far more often, despite the increased risks. The skies of the Dreaming offer faster travel, free from land-bound chimera who would slow a motley's progress. But there are no trods in the sky, and many winged chimera find the idea of devouring a flying carpet, along with its passengers, a pleasant concept. From above, the trods are easily followed. Still, the dangers are far greater. Some ships designed for flight drift too high and are burned by the sun, or find themselves stuck on passing stars. Only a truly skilled captain can avoid disaster in the Dreaming, where the Firchlís can change the weather in a matter of seconds and some chimerical creatures take offense at trespassers in their airy domains.





## Lexicon

**Augmen, The** — The effects of the Dreaming on changelings. As they go farther into the Dreaming, more of their true fae nature comes forth.

**Banal Shiver** — The seed of Banality that haunts the souls of all changelings, forever barring them from Arcadia.

**Dream Realms** — The Dreaming in its somewhat benign state, where the dangers are balanced by the wonders to be found.

**Dreamstuff** — The very fabric of the Dreaming, solidified Glamour.

**Firchlis, The** — Waves of change that ripple through the Dreaming and randomly alter landscapes or even the weather.

**Flesh Realm, The** — The mundane world, where changelings live their mortal lives and suffer the plague called Banality. Also called the waking world and the world of Flesh.

**Madness Realms** — Places in the Near Dreaming where the madness of human Dreamers can sometimes cause serious dilemmas for the Kithain.

**Mistweir** — The final barrier between the Far Dreaming and the Deep Dreaming. The Mistweir completely surrounds the Deep Dreaming and is a barrier between the mundane and the fantastic.

**Mythic Realm, The** — The Dreaming. Also, the world of Myth

**Nightmare Realms** — Where nightmares dwell in the Dreaming. These places, pushed by the Firchlis, can overrun the Dream Realms. Here, the threats are more serious than in many other parts of the Dreaming.

**Onus** — Kithain lost to Bedlam, who become a part of the trods they swear to protect from travelers.

**Otherwhere** — The void between the Dreaming and the Umbrae, where the unfortunate fall when walking between the trods. This place is not as empty as it might seem, and sometimes what falls into the Otherwhere comes back, altered beyond any hope of recognition.

**Paths of Balor** — One-way trods, different in color and texture from the Silver Paths. They lead to other realms, ones controlled by mages, Garou and wraiths. Most are found only in the Deep Dreaming.

**Reveries** — Flesh-bound chimera who've discovered ways to extend their time in the Waking World.

**Spawning Fields** — Places where the dreams of mortals pour directly into the Dreaming. They are dangerous places where chimera are born and often quickly expire.

**Stable Points** — Places in the Dreaming that remain mostly unaffected by the Firchlis.

**True Creatures of Myth** — Those chimera that reflect the creatures now lost to the waking world. Some chimera are recent creations of the Dreaming, but True Creatures of Myth have existed since the time of the Shattering. They are protected from the Banality of the Flesh Realm by the Dreaming's power.

**Twilight Realm** — Another name changelings give to the Dreaming.

**Umbrae** — Places of power for other supernatural entities: the High Umbra of the human sorcerers, the Middle Umbra of the werewolves and other shapeshifters and the Low Umbra, where the ghosts of dead mortals suffer damnation. Each is a complex place only barely understood by the most knowledgeable of Kithain.

**Vale of Mists, The** — The mystic barrier separating the Near Dreaming, the Far Dreaming and the Deep Dreaming, where the Mists of Forgetfulness are strongest.

## Using this Book

**Dreams and Nightmares** is a starting point. It's meant to generate ideas and help the Storyteller create adventures in lands far away, yet closer than most realize. The first rule of the Dreaming is that there are no rules, save what the Storyteller deems.

Certain elementary factors should remain the same whether characters are in the Dreaming or in the Flesh Realm. People still tend to stick to the ground, and when the wind blows, clothes are likely to rustle. Aside from these basic facts, Storytellers should try to keep in mind that all the laws of physics are strictly optional. Changelings adept in the ways of the Dreaming know that it's possible to walk on clouds, to run across a moonbeam, to partake of the moon's green cheese simply by reaching out for it, and even to breathe under water. The farther into the Dreaming one goes, the more optional the laws of physics become. In the Near Dreaming, there's still a risk of slipping and falling from a moonbeam; in the Far Dreaming, the pressure of being 100 fathoms below the surface of the water is still uncomfortable; in the Deep Dreaming, clouds are often made of cotton candy and can be eaten in a pinch.

The Dreaming is a dangerous place, but wondrous, as well. Suspension of disbelief is often all that's required to make miracles happen there. But the near-godlike talents of the Kithain in the Dreaming are commonplace; every entity in the Dreaming possesses great capabilities. In the pages to follow, you can see more of the Dreaming than has been previously revealed. Yet, what you'll read about still covers only the basics. The Dreaming can never be fully explained, nor can the areas it encompasses be mapped as easily as mortal realms can, for little remains the same from day to day in a world woven of infinite dreams.

**Dreams and Nightmares** gives shape to certain aspects of the Dreaming and clarifies much of what has been hinted at before. Each of the first three chapters deals with a different aspect of the Dreaming, while later chapters detail various realms, chimera, freeholds and more.

In **Chapter One**, the Near Dreaming is examined. The effects of the Near Dreaming on Kithain, humans and other oddities is explored in greater detail. Although there are rules pertaining to the game mechanics of the Near Dreaming, they appear later in the book.

**Chapter Two** deals with the Far Dreaming and explores



the transformations that affect changelings who manage to reach that place few have ever reached. The effects of Bedlam are covered here, as well as how the powers of changelings are altered by the fluctuating reality around them. Also, some "truths" about Glamour are examined.

**Chapter Three** covers the Deep Dreaming, where thought and reality are often close to the same thing. There are places of power here, as well as nightmares beyond the worst things ever imagined. The effects of the Deep Dreaming are explored, including what humans and Kithain alike can expect to encounter while visiting the most primal source of the changelings' power.

**Chapter Four** examines realms of interest to the Kithain. Notes on Arcadia and other mythic places reveal still more about the wonders all Kithain strive to find, and the final truths about the Mists are laid open for Storytellers to examine.

**Chapter Five** covers the freeholds and trods in greater detail, explaining their significance to the Dreaming.

**Chapter Six** examines the dangers of the Dreaming, encounters for characters and rules for chimerical creations, as well as an abundance of ready-to-use chimera just itching to get their talons on the Kithain.

The **Appendix** covers all the rules in greater detail. The true "physics" of the Dreaming is examined, and expanded rules for freeholds in the Dreaming are also covered. Details about Dreamstuff and Glamour are here, as are rules for just how quickly Banality fades from characters in the Dreaming.

**Recommended Reading:** The works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles de Lint, H.P. Lovecraft, Brian Lumley and Michael Moorcock. Stephen King's short story "Mrs. Todd's Shortcut," his novel *Insomnia* and his *Dark Tower* series. Also, Stephen King and Peter Straub's collaborative novel, *The Talisman*. All of the above works give wonderful examples of how time and space work differently in other realities, or they are simply fabulous examples of epic sagas. And, for reasons that should be self-evident, the collected Sandman graphic novels by Neil Gaiman et al.

**Recommended Viewing:** *Dreamscape*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Fantasia*, *Labyrinth*, *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, *The Dark Crystal*, *The Adventures of Little Nemo in Slumberland*, *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Warriors of Virtue*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* and, of course, *Harvey*.









# CHAPTER ONE: THE NEAR DREAMING

Mailanka felt the winds caress his hair and send chills of pleasure through his scalp and down his spine. Despite the situation, he loved the Dreaming as he loved little else. Standing there on the prow of the ship, he could feel the Mists parting, revealing forgotten memories. They were only the merest hints, but he also knew that the farther into the Twilight Realm they ventured, the more his memories would return. Deep within his heart, he was overjoyed.

Beneath his feet, The Dreamcatcher moved among the eddies of the wind, as it cut a path through the light clouds that gave shade to the fields and mountains below. Even as he watched, the course of a crystal-blue river shifted, its thread of color swirling across the landscape. Mailanka watched the ship's sleek shadow race across the ground below, the speed with which they moved mesmerizing him. Somewhere below them, the Cup of Einhorn, the only hope of saving Lady Amelia, waited. Mailanka's mood soured slightly, as his mind turned to darker things. The Cup could be anywhere, and the Dreaming was a very large place, larger than anyone really knew.

To make matters worse, Mumpoker was down there too, probably lost in a Dream Realm untouched by trods. Mailanka considered himself a brave eshu — and not unjustly — but the thought of being lost in the ever-changing beauty and chaos below was enough to chill his blood. There were things in the Dreaming...things best not thought of by anyone who wanted to remain sane. Despite his numerous trips to the Dreaming, Mailanka had only once stepped

away from a trod. For two years, he'd wandered the land, desperately seeking another path that would lead him home. Parts of that time were still lost to the Mists, and for that the eshu was grateful.

Mailanka was one of the few who'd ever visited the Nightmare Realms and returned intact. True, he had scars to reflect his time in the places where human fears spawn and multiply, but he'd managed to keep his mind and all of his limbs.

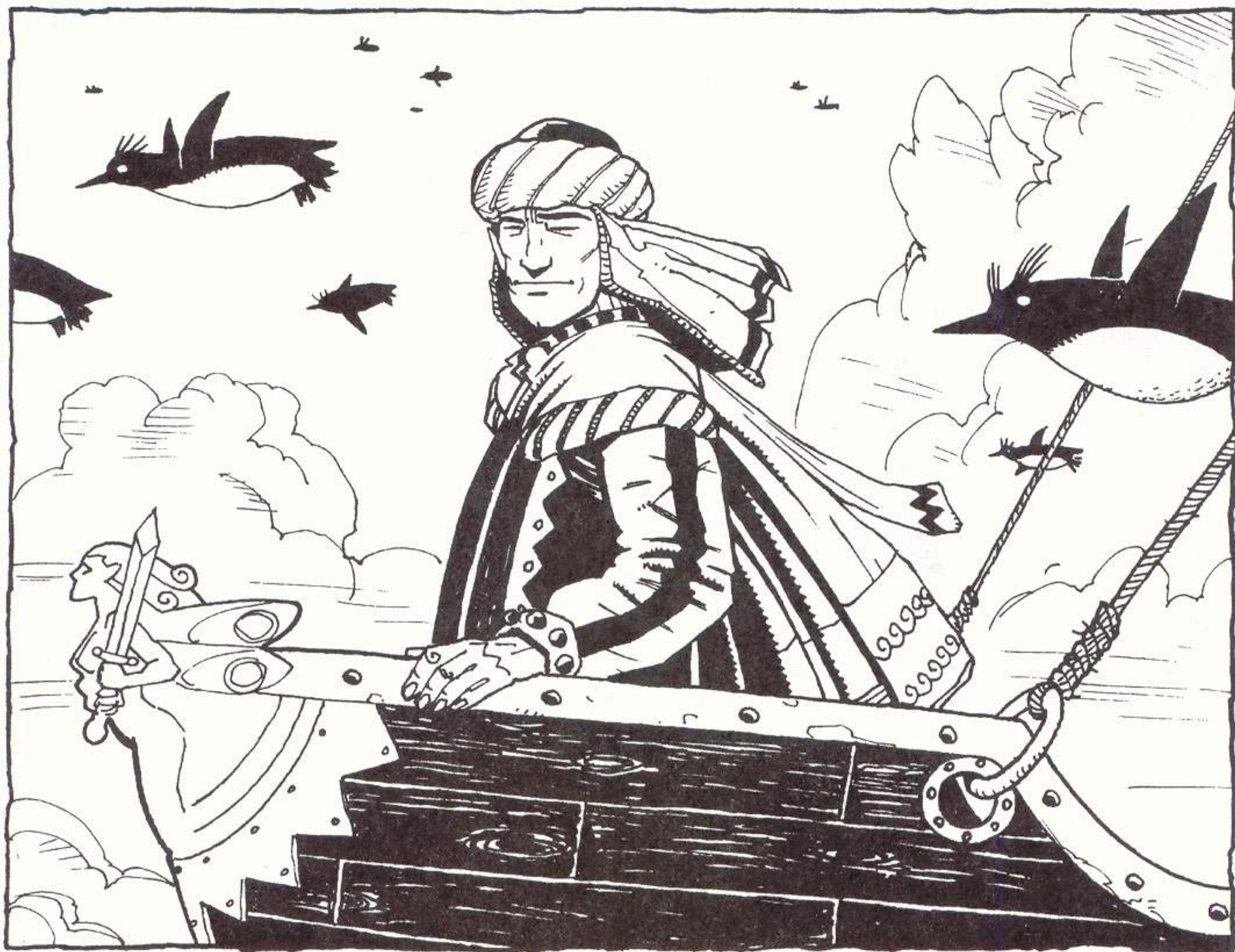
The sound of hooves behind him alerted Mailanka to Dmitri's approach. He turned to nod his silent greeting to the satyr. Dmitri was smiling, which was nothing extraordinary — Dmitri almost always smiled — but today his grin was larger than usual.

"Greetings, Mailanka. What a beautiful morning!" Dmitri's joy was infectious, and the eshu felt his mood lightening. The satyr drew in a deep breath, paused and released the air in a satisfied whoosh. "How can air smell so sweet and not be edible, I wonder?"

Mailanka laughed, sharing in Dmitri's childlike joy. "There are places in the Dreaming where you can, indeed, eat the clouds, Dmitri. But I've never run across one where the air was nutritious. Besides, if you ate it, you'd be belching the rest of the day and into the night."

Dmitri did a quick tap dance with his hooves as he moved in a circle and smiled even wider. "It's a risk I'd take! I always forget how much I love the Dreaming. Now I wonder why I should ever bother to return to the mundane world."





Mailanka shook his head. "It would be folly to stay here too long, Dmitri. Don't let the pleasures you see, feel and taste fool you."

"How could staying here ever be a mistake?"

Dmitri was simply being himself, and the eshu knew the question was rhetorical, but he answered anyway. "Bedlam and other unpleasanties."

The satyr lifted one eyebrow and showed a thoughtful frown. "Aye. There's something to be said for avoiding the madness." He grew silent for a moment and then sighed. "I still miss Eilonwy."

Mailanka started. He'd forced Eilonwy out of his mind over the years. He preferred not to remember the poor, drooling stick figure she'd become as her mind collapsed upon itself. Pooka were meant to know joy and to play their mostly harmless tricks. Eilonwy had forgotten all that somewhere along her journey into Bedlam. In the end, she'd looked like little more than a scarecrow, with bloody gashes on every part of her body her nails could reach. When Mailanka had brought her back to the Dreaming, it was in a last-ditch effort to save her from the madness of her dual existence. She'd gone running into the fields the second he set her down. The last he'd seen of her, she'd become a raven and flown away, feathers dropping from

her like leaves from a tree in autumn. He still wondered if he'd done the right thing.

He stared over the side of the ship, watching the Firchlis shimmer across the lands below, changing everything his eyes could see. The Dreamcatcher lurched suddenly to one side, sending eshu and satyr alike sliding across the deck. Dmitri bleated in fear as he struck the railing. Reacting instinctively, Mailanka reached out and grabbed his friend by the tail and one horn, stopping him from falling overboard.

Dmitri cried out in surprise again, demanding that Mailanka watch what he grabbed, and immediately following up with a heartfelt thanks. As the eshu prepared to respond, the sky above them darkened. The sound of howling wind came their way from the west, and both turned to see a sight they'd likely never forget.

The soft clouds that had been with them since the beginning of the journey were gone, replaced by pillars of lightning-split black. Below them, the land was barren, a dark expanse of jagged stone and bottomless crevasses. Even here, a distant silvery path ran like a river of mercury across the scabrous face of the Dreaming. Slowly, the ship's dangerous tilt righted itself, heading toward a safer angle that would again allow walking on deck.

Past the rumbling thunder of the clouds, they heard a sound that



threatened madness: a shrill, resounding blast of noise like none known in nature. Surely the bean sidhe could sound no more frightening.

Mailanka tracked the source of the sound and peered into the darkness behind them. Despite Dreamcatcher's speed, the storm was gaining on them. The darkness erupted, vomiting forth still darker shapes.

It took only seconds to distinguish the creatures moving toward them. Their froglike bodies and massive bat-wings made the clurghaugh impossible to miss, but despite their horrendous shapes, it was the creatures riding them who sent shivers of dread through the eshu's soul.

Redcaps: it was a veritable army of the fiends, armed with axes, crossbows and worse. And leading them all was the one redcap most feared by the motley — Bloody Nick. The brutal changeling grinned, framing gray teeth with his pallid face. Even from a hundred yards away, Mailanka could see the half of Nick's face that bore no skin, only muscle and bone. Bloody Nick howled triumphantly and waved his followers forward. Down they came, spilling from the storm like a hail of demons. The edge of the redcap's ax gleamed with dull red light, hinting at the violence to come.

There were so many of them! Mailanka reached for his spear, knowing in the depths of his soul that it was already too late. They were done for, and their quest had only just begun....

## Geography of the Near Dreaming

Come now, my child,  
if we were planning to harm you,  
do you think we'd be lurking here  
beside the path in the very darkest  
part of the forest?

— Kenneth Patchen, "But Even So"

It is almost impossible to map the Twilight Realm. Areas of dream-reality mutate constantly, as the dreams that shape them change. These geographical changes are referred to as the Firchlís and can be troublesome affairs. There is no guaranteed route through the Dreaming, not even in that area closest to the mundane world, the Near Dreaming. That's one of the first rules of the Mythic Realms.

Of course, there are always exceptions. Cities in the Flesh Realm tend to have mirror images in the Near Dreaming, though the mirror used is most certainly distorted. A few of the most powerful freeholds are actually situated at the cusp of Flesh and Myth. They manage to exist in both locations. Perhaps it is these seats of Kithain power that actually hold the dream cities stationary, though no one can say for certain.

The entrances to freeholds are the only guaranteed stable points in the Dreaming. They remain the same from visit to visit, always recognizable, though everything around them may well change completely. In the Dreaming, it's not unusual to encounter a freehold's trod that is surrounded by trees and a fast







flowing stream where, only a week before, there was an open field filled with flowers. The changes are inevitable, though gradual enough that only individuals who've been away from the freehold for a few days ever seem to notice.

Numerous Kithain build homes in the Near Dreaming, usually close to a freehold, and sometimes even physically anchored to such a structure. Despite these precautions, even the best of these domiciles is affected by the Firchlis as it sweeps the Dreamscape. Few homes here ever stay the way they looked when they were first built, at least on their exteriors. A massive structure of pure, white marble might well become a wooden fort in a week's time and then continue changing until its resident discovers he has a home in the base of a massive redwood tree. Within a few more weeks, the structure could well be a glass palace or a gigantic mushroom in a forest of fungi. The interior of the home usually stays the same, but changes on the outside are beyond the control of all but the most diligent changelings. A few Kithain, normally pooka and trolls, take bets on what shapes houses will take after the next Firchlis.

Freeholds also connect the most important facet of the Dreaming, the trods. These pathways have often existed for hundreds of years, and they are always present. The difference between trods and freeholds is that trods often change over time, bending in new directions as the land beneath them flows and mutates.

Each Firchlis holds a potential danger for all Kithain using the trods. As the landscape changes, trods tend to conform to whatever alterations come along. Changelings are not quite as mutable, however, and the unwary traveler might find a trod moving quickly away if she isn't firmly in place. It's seldom that a Firchlis is sudden enough to cause a problem, but there have been a few cases. In one noteworthy situation, a troll named Reighuar stepped off a trod to make certain a group of marauding chimera stayed well away from the band he'd sworn to protect. When he turned back, the trod was moving rapidly away from him. By the time the Firchlis had finished its changes, Reighuar had run almost 20 leagues in an effort to keep his allies in sight. That's one of the reasons changelings always warn one another to stay on the trod at all times. There's no guarantee the Silver Road will still be there when you return from a side trip, no matter how brief your time away might be.

## Madness Realms

Madness Realms are, perhaps, the most dangerous areas of the Near Dreaming. In these places, the dreams of mortals who've surrendered their sanity are often realized. Mad dreams are extremely powerful and can catch an unwary traveler in their twisted realities for extended periods. Madness Realms are particularly dangerous, because they can affect the trods upon which changelings travel. Kithain walking the Silver Path can find themselves tossed into a Madness Realm, caught in the chimerical reality of an insane person's dreams, until they can solve a puzzle that is often illogical or even insoluble. Sometimes, they remain trapped in these Madness Realms until the Dreamers who create the realms awaken from sleep — which, in the case of some mental



institutions, can take a very long time, especially where tranquilizers are used to control the violently insane. When a Madness Realm frees its captives, they always find themselves back on the trod, or wherever they were when they were grabbed, with no explanation for what has occurred. Any damage inflicted in a Madness Realm remains, just as any prizes grasped there are still at hand when the ordeal is finished.

## Nightmare Realms

The Firchlis can do more than move a trod. From time to time, the Firchlis can completely alter the shape of the Dreaming in a matter of seconds. While these events often mean nothing more than a mere change of scenery from field to forest, it can also mean a shift from Dream to Nightmare.

Nightmare Realms differ from Dream Realms only in that the former are not hospitable to most changelings. Where weather is fair, it grows instantly foul. Dark clouds obscure sunlight or moonlight, and powerful winds howl across landscapes often barren and always hostile. The sluagh and the redcaps know these places best, and they are well equipped to deal with the horrid chimera often encountered here. Both kith were born in regions of Arcadia very similar to such places—spawned from the fear of night's darkness and creatures that kill without fear or remorse. In the Nightmare Realms, there are no unicorns or pixies. There is no love here, for the Nightmare Realms are bred of fear, hatred and violence, much as the Dreaming is born of love, hope and happiness. There is little danger to Kithain who remain on the trods in these areas, though. Even in these blasted, hoary pits, there is safety on the Silver Path. Thallain do lurk in these places, seeking to trick unwary Kithain from the safety of the path. Fortunately, the Thallain, by their very nature, are forbidden the use of the trods; much like chimera, they must resort to trickery and foul tactics for a chance to do battle with the Kithain.

As with all such phenomena, there are rumors of powerful Thallain who can move the Nightmare Realms at will. If such creatures exist, they must be extremely rare, for the freeholds still stand in most areas, and only a few have ever suffered from extended battles with the minions of Nightmare.

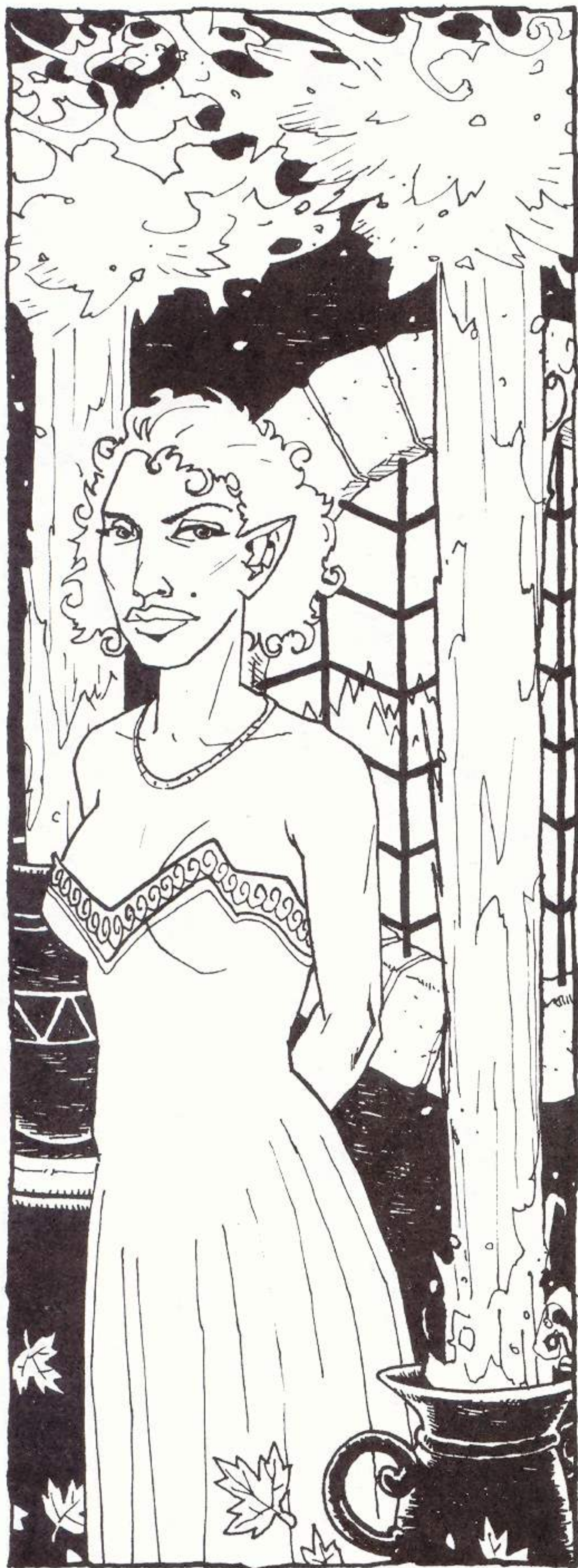
## Distant Cities

One common phenomenon in the Near Dreaming is called the Distant Cities. These strange places are inevitably beautiful and almost always unreachable. Distant Cities are places seen on the horizon, places of wonder and glory that shine as brightly as the sun on the first true day of spring. Sometimes, they appear to be only a few miles distant, and other times they seem a hundred leagues away. But always, they are mesmerizing, filled with crystalline towers and bridges of gold, colorful banners and music that haunts the region of whispers. Even from miles away, people see the inhabitants of the Distant Cities and long to meet them, for surely anyone that beautiful must know the way to Arcadia.

Sadly, Distant Cities are elusive. They remain forever on the horizon, never coming any closer, no matter how many







miles a changeling might run or even fly. It takes a strong will to ignore the lure of the Distant Cities, where surely there must be a thousand pleasures to relieve every doubt. The Distant Cities call to fae just as the sirens of old called to sailors. While no one is absolutely certain, it's believed that the Distant Cities are just as dangerous.

No trod ever leads to a Distant City. The only possible way to get closer to them is to leave the safety of the Silver Path. Yet long before a changeling can reach even the threshold of the nearest building, the Firchlís seems always to push a Distant City still farther away. Fae who make a run for it are often lost in the Dreaming, never to be seen again, and Wayfare cantrips seem always to fall short of the city itself. There are tales of Kithain who have, indeed, managed to reach a Distant City, though no one tells a tale of anyone ever returning from one. Perhaps the Distant Cities are too filled with wonders or even contain secret gateways to Arcadia. Or perhaps these cities are of a more sinister nature. No one can truly say.

## Freeholds

Most freeholds are linked to the Dreaming by a trod, though not always. In some rare cases, freeholds actually exist entirely in the Mythic Realms, though such places are rare. But even these anomalies are somehow linked to the mundane world. For that reason, freeholds are safe from the ever-changing chaos of the Twilight Realm. Kithain who dwell within the freeholds understand this fact, though they no longer understand exactly how these powerful places between the worlds were created.

Despite their presence in the Near Dreaming, changelings in freeholds do not experience many of the changes that affect Kithain who are in the Mythic Realm. The memories of such fae are unaffected, and while Banality isn't gained in freeholds, it isn't as easily lost, either. The same aspects of a freehold's nature that protect it from the Firchlís prevent the Dreaming from influencing, at full force, Kithain who remain inside a structure's safety zone.

## The Silver Path

The very nature of trods is often confusing to people, since a trod is both an entrance into the Dreaming and the road upon which the fae walk while in the Dreaming. Trods are, indubitably, the safest method of travel for changelings. Still, they have their own risks. Some trods have a tendency to fade away beneath the feet of anyone who travels upon them, unless certain conditions are met. Others simply refuse a traveler entrance. (For more information on entering trods, see **Chapter Five**.)

## Entering the Near Dreaming

The most common means of entering the Near Dreaming is through a trod in a freehold (see **Chapter Six** for more details). Trods link the freeholds and mark out areas of the Dreaming that are considered "safe" by changelings. While there are still temptations and curiosities in abundance around trods, Kithain who remain on the Silver Path are generally



insulated from harm. Only ones foolhardy enough to leave the Path are in danger of being attacked by chimera or need fear getting lost in the Mythic Realms. Trods are Stable Points within the Dreaming and offer substantial protection from the myriad threats to Kithain well-being. Of course, trods all have their starting points at some freehold, but freeholds are not always available, so other routes into the Near Dreaming must sometimes be found.

It's possible to enter the Dreaming by "Dream Riding," literally catching onto a dream as it forms in a human's mind and goes into the Dreaming, provided the rider is adept in the

## Memories in the Near Dreaming

Most changelings experience déjà vu when they enter the Near Dreaming. Glamour fills the air and their souls are reminded of what the world once looked like and how they once lived, many incarnations ago. For most, it brings about a sense of well-being.

For some, it also brings back the faintest stirrings of past lives. They do not receive any bonuses as a result of these distant recollections. They simply begin to remember past associations. A Kithain known for years and thought of as a casual acquaintance might suddenly become far more important in the Near Dreaming. The past holds its secrets well, and the Dreaming is often one method of getting a glimpse at those secrets. In the Near Dreaming, feelings stir more than actual memories do. A troll might suddenly be angry with a nocker, yet unaware of *why* she's angry. Or a sidhe might be strangely drawn to study the face of a pooka, uncertain why the face he's known for years is suddenly so fascinating.

In the plainest terms possible: This device is for Storytellers to expand plots, not for the player characters to exploit as a source of cheap, new powers.

Banality can destroy a floating bicycle sculpted from Dreamstuff, especially in cities where a changeling could well be spotted pedaling his legs and moving across the sky without any visible support — at least to the eyes of the mortals below, anyway. The changeling isn't likely to fall to the ground and die — that would be too easy. Instead, Kithain caught by Banality in such a situation almost always gets shunted into the Dreaming. Changelings believe this event to be the Flesh Realm's method of dealing with unwanted and blatant acts of the fantastic. (Human mages refer to this effect as Paradox, and a few mages who've heard tales of this sudden banishment have tried to understand the functions of Glamour and the nature of the Kithain, but all to no real avail.) When thrust so roughly into the Dreaming, most changelings tend to fall into areas where there is no Silver Path. Without trods to guide them and offer protection from the menaces that thrive in the Twilight Realm, Kithain are not likely to find their way home for a very long time, if ever.

Aside from the aforementioned ways, there are still other methods for getting to the Near Dreaming. A few work even for mortals, though they are hardly the safest methods.

Some people who fall into comas find themselves in the Dreaming, though not in the same way that the Kithain are there. Instead, they become observers, shadows who can do little but enjoy the show and occasionally have a pleasant conversation with a passing chimera. These observers often learn amazing things about the Mythic Realm and the changelings, secrets that they can revel in and wonder about for as long as they remain in their comatose state. Most forget the experience as soon as they awaken, though some are changed by their time in the Dreaming. Ones who remember the Dreaming are always cursed with only the briefest flashes, images that seldom make sense but that still generate a warmth noticeable by even the most banal souls. Humans who return from such jaunts into the Mythic Realm seldom go back to their old ways, and instead seek to recover their lost paradise by doing good deeds and helping others. The deeds make them feel better, closer to the Dreaming, which they've touched and lost.

Sometimes, the very fortunate among these souls remain attuned to the Dreaming and capable of seeing changelings for what they are. Many Kithain have glimpsed in passing a kind smile from a mortal stranger who watched their antics, yet had no place in the world of the fae. Such people are truly rare but are a welcome sight.

The last way to enter the Near Dreaming is almost unknown, and even among changelings who understand the concept, it is often considered foolhardy. It is simple desire. By wanting something bad enough, a person, Kithain or human, can sometimes enter the Dreaming. What they want has to be some challenge that goes beyond physical possibilities, and, even then, it often takes many attempts. Trying to reach the clouds by climbing mountains isn't enough; you must try to stand on the clouds before the Dreaming lets you in. Driving as fast as your car permits won't gain you entry into the Dreaming, but driving faster than physics allows can sometimes get you

Dream-Craft Art (see page 128). By expending a permanent Glamour point, the changeling can grasp the forming dream in both hands and let it carry him into the Dreaming, as the dream moves from the mundane into the Mythic. The difficulty is finding a mortal who is just starting to dream. However, not only is this method very difficult, it can leave its user virtually anywhere in the Dreaming. As the Twilight Realm is filled with both wonders and dangers, Dream Riding is considered a last ditch method for "jumping" into the Dreaming.

Traveling in chimerical vehicles can also lead to accidental excursions into the Dreaming. Such contrivances are wonders that many Kithain love to play with. Most changelings believe that the more outrageous the device, the better the ride. However, using strictly chimerical vehicles to travel in the Flesh Realm is a dangerous game. With the greatest of ease,





there. In the end, it comes to solving riddles you weren't consciously aware of, but which exist just the same. When you start taking short cuts that don't exist, you are at the edge of the Dreaming. When the short cuts defy the laws of physics, you actually make it into the world of Myth.

## Changelings and the Dreaming

The Dreaming has many profound effects on changelings. First and foremost, it purifies them, gradually removing most traces of Banality from their beings. The Dreaming is the source of all Glamour, and, therefore, it always has an impact on changelings, but in the Dreaming itself that influence is increased.

All changelings find that using cantrips in the Near Dreaming is easier. They must still expend Glamour, but in a land created from Dreamstuff, replenishing Glamour is as easy as drinking water from a cool stream or even breathing the perfume of the trees. Even on trods, it's easier to replenish Glamour.

## When the Mists Begin to Thin

Many changelings coming into the Near Dreaming claim to feel the Mists parting for them. Memories of who they once were, in previous incarnations, are stronger, more vital, outside the Flesh Realm. That's not always a good thing, as they can also remember slights from their past lives. Kithain who've had nothing but pleasant encounters in the mundane world suddenly begin to recall insults cast at them a hundred years earlier, and some manage to hold a grudge, despite the general feeling of well-being they experience upon returning to the Mythic Realm. Bitter rivalries from the past can reignite, and so can romances that were completely forgotten. These relationships, too, can lead to disaster, especially when a third party has since stepped into the picture. Some Kithain forget themselves when they first enter the Near Dreaming; they can easily become lost in the past, and act as if what once was still is. Brutal battles have been waged between longtime friends, as a result of entering the Dreaming together. The same holds true of old lovers entering the Near Dreaming. It's a rare changeling who can long stand the sight of a true love suddenly devoting attention to someone from past adventures and glories.



## As Banality Fades

While it might take a few days in the timeless Dreaming for it to happen, Banality does begin to wash away from a Kithain in the Near Dreaming. For some, the difference is negligible, but for the grumps, the difference is almost always immediately noticeable. The lines of bitterness fade from a mouth often pulled into a scowl, and the eyes that previously seemed faded begin to sparkle again. It's not all that unusual for a grump to decide to stay in the Near Dreaming when the rest of a motley is ready to go. In many ways, the return to the Dreaming is like a chance to rectify everything that went wrong — not physically, but in the mind. Many grumps see the situation as an opportunity to start over, and a few have even managed to make a go of it.

Grumps in the Near Dreaming find the freedom from Banality's grip hard to sacrifice, for they know in their hearts that their return to the mundane world will mean the return of its slow, inevitable dulling. Murfred Trueaim, a boggan of some repute in the Kingdom of Pacifica, said his farewells to his motley and set off along a trod that led to the Deep Dreaming. His last words to his longtime friends were inscribed on a statue created in his honor: "I can no more return to the mundane world than I could willingly surrender my life to cancer. Banality creeps up on you like arthritis of the soul. I'll not feel that pain again." Below that inscription is the boggan's full name and another inscription: "He Smiled as He Left Us, and His Heart was Unburdened." A few who report having seen Murfred in the distance, not too far from the trod leading to the freehold, swear the old grump looked a dozen years younger.

Arts and Realms in the Near Dreaming are more powerful than in the mundane world. In the latter, cantrips usually have only chimerical effects, but in the former, all their effects are real. The same stands true of chimerical weapons and creatures. In the Near Dreaming, items crafted from Dreamstuff take on a new solidity. The damage caused by a chimerical mace is real here, and so is the damage it inflicts. Death in the Near Dreaming means death in the mundane world as well. Chimerical death simply doesn't exist in the Mythic Realms.

## Mortals and the Near Dreaming.

Although it's rare that mortals actually enter the Near Dreaming, it does happen from time to time. Some of the influences remain the same as for changelings. Chimerical damage in the Near Dreaming is still "real" damage, even for mortals. In this sense, dreams *can* kill you. Mundanes who find themselves in the Dreaming at any stage soon discover that changelings have powers beyond mortal imagination. Mages, too, often learn this truth. Many of them manage to penetrate the barrier that separates them from the Dreaming and soon learn that the world isn't exactly what they originally perceived it to be. Time doesn't work on mortals the same way it does on Kithain. Mage and Sleeper alike sometimes discover that, during their few hours in the Near Dreaming, they were away from the Flesh Realm for several months. Just as often, the opposite is true; half a lifetime spent among changelings in the Near Dreaming sometimes is only an hour for mortals.





Another fact is that the Mists work in both directions for mortals. The Mists often pull away mortals' mundane memories and leave them disoriented when they arrive in the Dreaming. All their beliefs in the banal are washed from them as surely as they are from the Kithain. The difference is, the effect on humans is strictly temporary: When mortals return to the mundane world, their Banality returns too. Most mortals remember their time in the Dreaming as little more than a dream, though sometimes a particularly vivid one.

There is another part of the Dreaming that waits eagerly for mortals and seeks to claim what it once had. Every human dreams, and their dreams are a part of the Dreaming, along with their nightmares. Every hope and ambition they've discarded waits in the Mythic Realm, along with their past fears and the secret dreads they lock away in the darkest parts of their souls.

Chimera sense when a mortal enters the Dreaming, and ones formed from the mind of the mortal in question often come seeking their creator. Most chimera are drawn by the raw Dreamstuff the human can generate when asleep. They've no real intentions toward the mortal one way or the other. A few seek something more, though. The personal nightmares of the human who finds herself in the Dreaming come to do what they've always sought to accomplish: to terrify and even to

destroy. The dream lovers and erotic fantasies of the Dreamer sometimes come seeking to soothe the pain of the waking world. Others, such as long-abandoned imaginary friends, who were always there when needed and then were discarded like so much rubbish, want something else. They seek revenge, or, at the very least, they demand to know why they were abandoned. Being creatures of dream, the answers they seek will seldom bear any connection to logic. Mages and dreamers alike have something to fear upon entering the Dreaming. Fortunately for them, chimera can move only so fast, and once abandoned, they can end up anywhere in the Dreaming. It often takes a long, long time for the chimera of an imaginary friend to reach its progenitor; otherwise, few mortals would survive their first few minutes walking through the Dreaming.

Occasionally, humans visit the Dreaming when they sleep and dream. Most mortals must be enchanted by Glamour to enter the Dreaming as a physical being. Once enchanted, they can remain in the Dreaming for a very long time, especially if their enchantment is replenished.

Enchanted humans must gather fresh Glamour in one of two ways. They can either be granted the Glamour by a changeling, or they can consume the food of the Dreaming. Humans who eat the food of the Dreaming risk certain prob-





lems, however. They can enchant themselves into a world of trouble by eating too much. Food of the Dreaming is a delicacy, often tasting exactly like whatever a mortal might crave. When eaten in very small quantities — a single grape, or a finger sandwich for example — the Dreamstuff food can nourish a mortal for however long they remain in the Dreaming (and give them extra time in the Mythic Realms, too). But gluttonous mortals who partake freely of the food of the Dreaming are effectively enchanting themselves. Each morsel increases the enchantment and also adds to the effects of the Mists of Forgetfulness. Anyone who eats too much is likely to forget not only where they are but who they are. The luckier humans who overindulge find themselves stumbling from the woods near their homes perhaps 20 years after their last meal. The unlucky ones often end up as the main course for one of the deadlier chimera in the Dreaming.

Mages often find the Dreaming defies their magick. The laws of physics no longer apply in the same way, and all their beliefs in the Spheres fall short of the reality of the Dreaming. What should occur seldom does, as the Dreaming makes the rules in its domain. An attempt to cast lightning from the sky is more likely to conjure a chimerical nightmare than it is to generate electricity. In most cases, the results of these attempts are harmless, and after a fashion mages can indeed work magick while they visit the Dream Realms, but the end results are likely to work properly only if the mage can comprehend the Arts and

Realms of the changelings, who long ago mastered the odd physics of the Dreaming.

Even here, mages are not safe from Paradox. If anything, they're more likely to suffer for their attempts to change the rules. A Nephandus mage of some repute once managed to enter the Near Dreaming. She was familiar with changelings, after having done a great deal of research and having tortured the truths of the Dreaming from a dozen or so of the Kithain.

Her plan was simple enough: By controlling the Dreaming, she believed she could control the dreams of all mankind. By controlling the dreams of the Sleepers, she was certain she could control their reality. She was hardly the first to reach such a conclusion, nor was she the only one to suffer for her folly.

At first, she believed her scheme was working. She cast a summoning spell to bring forth her masters, hoping to free them into the world by bypassing the barriers between the Umbrae and the mortal world. For her troubles, demons did indeed appear, as did other things from the Nightmare Realm. She made her requests and believed her dark masters heard her and granted her desires.

At that precise moment, the Dreaming took notice of the Nephandus, actual notice as opposed to the casual notice It had given her before. The Dreaming was not amused. With the fury of a thousand storms, the Nightmare Realm the foolish mage had summoned rained down upon her. In seconds, her mind was shattered...her body took a much longer time to expire.

Mages would do well to understand that the Dreaming takes care of Itself and Its minions. The Dreaming is alive, though not in any way mere mortals could hope to understand.

## Chimerical Death and Mortals

The Dreaming sometimes finds itself in an unusual predicament. The Mists of Forgetfulness and Glamour can get a human into the Mythic Realm and make them obey the laws of the Dreaming, but they do not remove the mortal shell of a human in the process. Chimerical death for changelings in the Dreaming means death, pure and simple. But chimerical death for mortals leaves a human who is no longer connected to the Dreaming, and who risks infecting the Mythic Realm with Banality.

The solution for this problem is simple and effective: When in doubt, discard the potential threat. Humans who suffer chimerical death in the Dreaming are immediately "dropped" into one of the Umbrae. In the cases of wraiths, Garou and mages, they all fall into the appropriate Umbra. In the cases of the rare vampire who can gain access to the Dreaming, she is dropped into the Shadowlands — where she often finds waiting for her a large number of wraiths who wish to discuss the method of their demise. In the case of Dreamers, they usually end up in the Near High Umbra, where they are subject to the whims of the Weaver and the Banality the Weaver generates.

## Places of Import in the Near Dreaming

There are stable points in the Near Dreaming, places where even the Firchlís doesn't manage to erase every feature of the Dreamscape. These are places of great import to the changelings, for they are rare markers that can help a Kithain find trods if she's willing to risk the inherent dangers around them. Some are rivers, some are mountains and some are cities not quite like the ones seen in the mundane world.

Every Kingdom of the changelings is reflected in the Near Dreaming, just as surely as every city of the mortals is reflected in the Umbrae. Unlike those other reflections, the Kingdoms change constantly, victims — or beneficiaries — of the Firchlís.

Certain elements always remain the same: the trods and the buildings remain intact, though they, too, undergo constant alteration. In the Kingdoms of the Kithain, the desires and needs of changelings are constantly seen to by the Near Dreaming. Each Kingdom reflects the dreams of the Kithain and especially the dreams of its rulers. Seelie Kingdoms remain bright, cheerful places where the sounds of happiness fill the air. Unseelie Kingdoms often feature dark landscapes that drift



## Rules of the Dreaming

The following is a summary of rules modifications that can be used when changeling characters are in the Near Dreaming.

- Cantrips are, by their very nature, easier to cast while the caster is in the Near Dreaming. The difficulty for all cantrips is lowered by one. (The difficulty can never be lowered below 4, however.)
- All new memories gained while in the Near Dreaming are erased when the character leaves the Dreaming.
- All things chimerical are considered to be Wyrd while in the Dreaming, which means any damage inflicted by a cantrip or a chimerical creature or item is real. This damage remains once the character leaves the Dreaming. Changelings killed in the Dreaming are forever lost, while other supernaturals and mortals are expelled into the nearest appropriate Umbra (see page 31).
- While in the Dreaming, temporary and even permanent Banality begins to fade. See page 12 for further details on this effect.

further from the mundane world with every passing day. The Shadow Court holds these dark palaces in the Near Dreaming, whether or not they hold power in the corresponding mortal realms. Here, the chimera are stronger, more capable of ruling over anything they desire. The Kingdoms reflected in the Near Dreaming are likelier to have dragons or giants in true control, rather than any mere changeling. A freehold found at the heart of such a Kingdom is safe from the dangers of the cities around it, protected by the Silver Path. But there are very real dangers to wandering through the cities in the Near Dreaming. They may reflect the ideals and hopes of the Kithain, but they also incorporate the dreams and goals of mortals, as well as their fears and nightmares.

While in the Near Dreaming Kingdoms, changelings can encounter the actual dreams of slumbering mortals. They can touch those dreams and take from them what they will, without causing any harm to the Dreamers in the mundane world. Much to the frustration of many Unseelie Kithain, however, fae can effect only cosmetic changes upon those dreams. Not even Kithain with the Dream-Craft Art can influence the dreams of Mortals, save to add an occasional element and make the dream more pleasant or less so.

There are tales of powerful Kithain sorcerers capable of mutating dreams for their own purposes, but if any such beings still exist, they are well hidden, perhaps even dwelling in Arcadia. The chimera of the Near Dreaming simply don't listen well to the orders of changelings, not even the commands of the sidhe.

## The Great Chasm

Occupying the same location that the Grand Canyon does in the mundane world, the Great Chasm is a bottomless crack across the face of the Near Dreaming. Few Kithain are bold or foolish enough to journey into its depths, for here be monsters.

The Great Chasm manifested not long after the Shattering, ripping through the Dreaming and causing no end of trouble for the nunnehi. Even the Firchlís has no noticeable effect on the shape of the Great Chasm. The Great Chasm is the only stable Nightmare Realm on the continent, and it is a constant source of new fears, a Spawning Field for chimerical nightmares and dark, foul things.

But it's rumored that the Great Chasm also holds treasures long thought lost to the world and the Kithain. Although no evidence exists, many claim the greatest chimerical treasures ever seen are hidden in the depths of the Great Chasm, from Excalibur to the Black Cauldron of Arawn. There is only one certainty about the Great Chasm: it exists in all levels of the Dreaming, and on all levels it is a source of nightmares.

## The Rivers of Phantasia

The Rivers of Phantasia cover the continent in the Near Dreaming, just as the Colorado, Mississippi and Rio Grande cover the United States of America. Although only a few Kingdoms are blessed by these waters, their influence is always felt when changelings manage to find them. The waters of these rivers are as pure and sweet as the finest of dreams. Drinking from these waters is enough to soothe any hunger and can even cure wounds, both real and chimerical. At certain points, the Rivers of Phantasia are allegedly capable of erasing the years from a changeling. Grumps who drink from the waters can grow younger, even to the point of becoming mere childlings once more. While no memories are lost as a result of these changes in age, outlooks are reversed: It's not only the body that grows younger, but the soul as well.

Perhaps the Kithain could benefit more from such spots, but the locations move constantly along the Rivers of Phantasia, pushed by the Firchlís, despite the unchanging appearance of the rivers.

## The Lake of Sorrows

Where the Great Salt Lake rests in the Kingdom of the Burning Sun, the Lake of Sorrows is mirrored in the Near Dreaming. The Lake of Sorrows holds within its depths a city of incredible beauty and unspeakable majesty. Towers rise beneath the waters and come within inches of the air; occasionally, an individual sees the inhabitants of this city looking up at him, even as he peers down into the waters. Treasures beyond the scope of mortal imagination gleam brightly in the depths, sometimes held in hands and sometimes resting on the mother-of-pearl-colored cobblestones in the very depths of the lake. This city thrives, filled with Kithain both familiar and unknown to changelings. Despite changelings' powers and



their fabulous abilities, though, they cannot reach the city beneath the surface. Many sidhe have gazed upon this wonder and wept openly. No one knows for certain what this city should be called, but a few of the sidhe swear it resembles Arcadia in every aspect.

Arcadia or not, it is close enough to see and still remains forever out of reach.

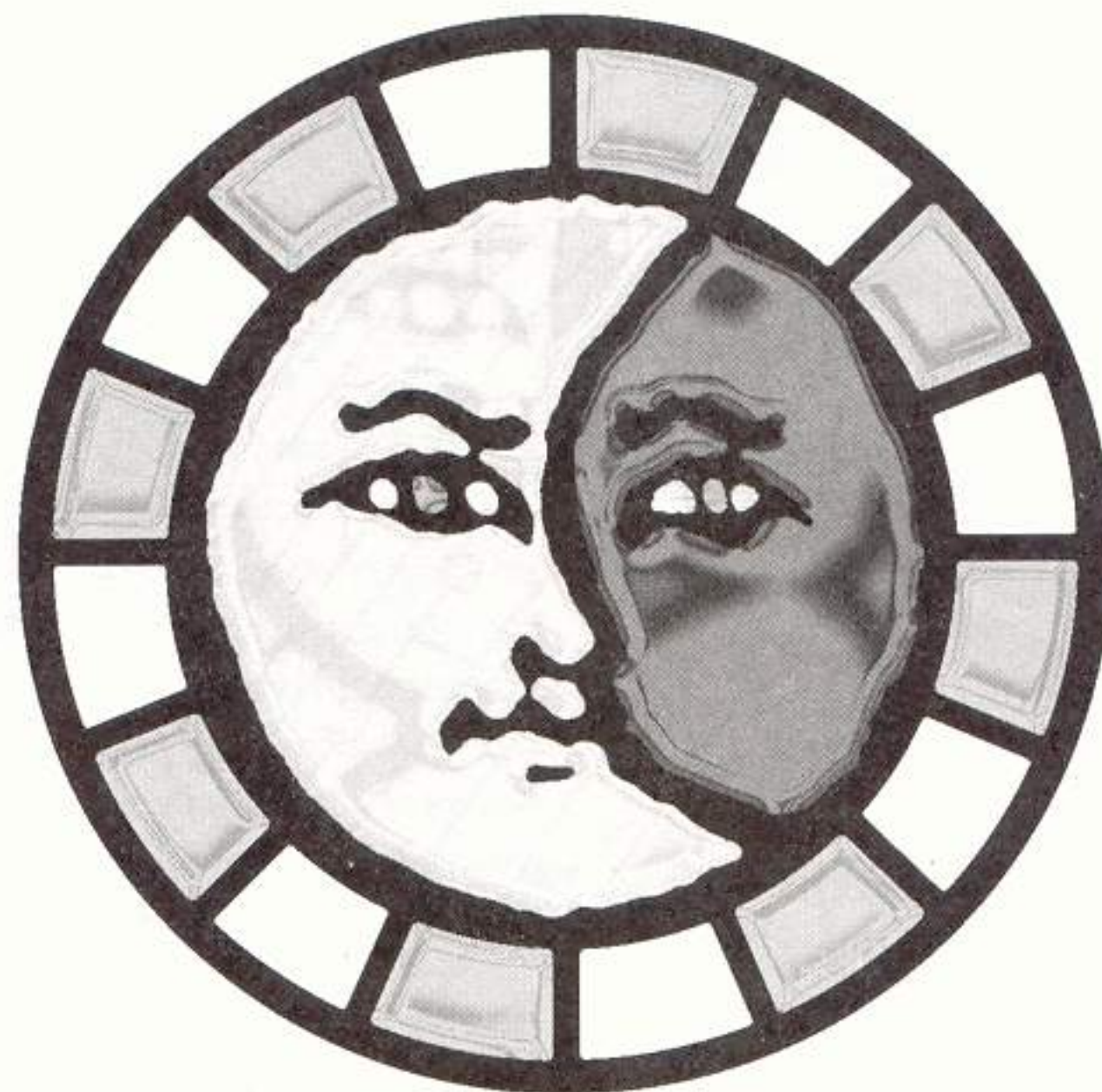
## The Seas of Dream

The Near Dreaming has oceans, just as the waking world has oceans. While they reflect the placement of the mundane seas, the Seas of Dream are collective wonders unto themselves. Somewhere in the depths of the oceans, Atlantis still rests, and the merpeople make their homes. Great leviathans sleep here, waiting until the proper time to make their presence known and dreaming dreams beyond even Kithain compre-

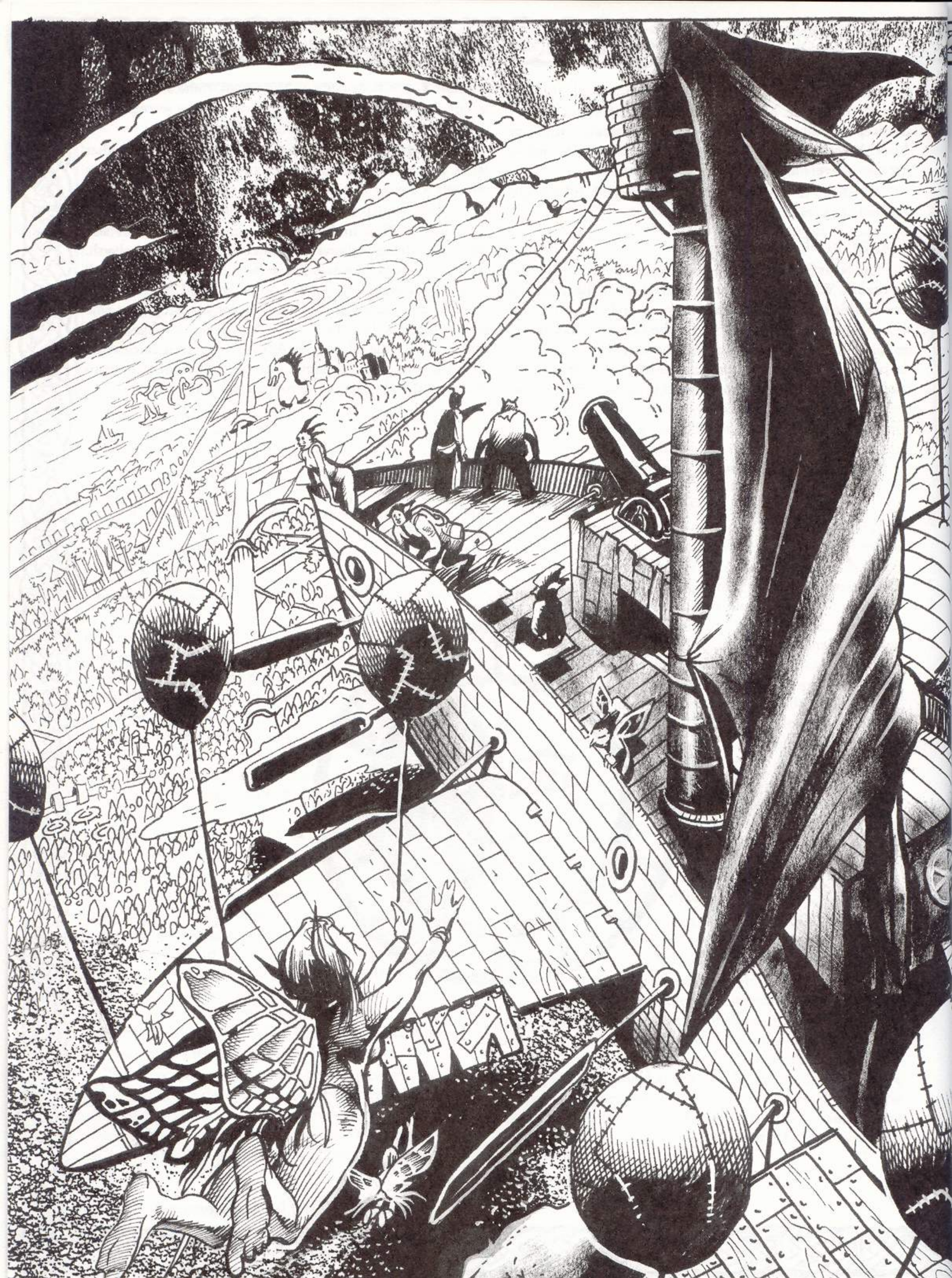
hension. Cities float beneath the waves, some still thriving, some long abandoned, all waiting to reveal their secrets to any curious and brave enough to explore them.

Somewhere beyond the Seas of Dream, there are other lands, all with secrets and wonders of their own. Perhaps they are only a day away from Concordia, perhaps the trip would take millennia. In the end, there's only one real way to find out.

There are trods in the Seas of Dream. They glisten as faint trails where the sea is always calmer and the winds are not as harsh. Although most are not as visible as the Silver Path, they are still noticeable to experienced sailors of the Seas of Dream. As with other trods, these water-bound paths protect changelings wise enough to follow them. Even the greatest waves can't harm a ship that runs along the Silver Path. As with other trods, carelessness almost always leads to disaster. In the Seas of Dream, great spans of ocean surrender themselves to the Otherwhere.









# CHAPTER TWO: THE FAR DREAMING

Sven awoke to a thunderous pulse of pain in the back of his head and to the sound of coarse laughter. He tried to open one eye slowly, but found it crusted shut. Without moving, he tried his other eye and, though his view was mostly of the ground, he found he could see. He almost wished he couldn't. In the distance, what was left of the sailing ship Dreamcatcher lay broken on a grassy hill. Several redcaps moved about the ruin, pillaging what they could or breaking away boards to feed the bonfire raging near the wreck.

The troll slowly moved his head and winced as the pain in his skull flared. With his one good eye, he looked around, assessing what he could of the situation. Mailanka was not far away, his muscular arms hoisted above his head and his feet dangling several inches from the ground. The eshu had fought well, but the redcaps were too many. Alongside the eshu hung Dmitri, bound in similar fashion. His left hoof was broken and bleeding, his torso stained red with his own blood.

The world seemed to swim a bit, but when his vision refocused, Sven could see that the two bound fae before him seemed...different. They were more than they had been a second before. Despite his wounds, Dmitri appeared robust, and fairly exuded a raw sex appeal. Mailanka seemed taller, stronger and somehow wilder. The eshu threw himself away from the tree where he was bound, shaking his arms to free himself, all to no avail. Despite his efforts, all the eshu managed was to make the redcaps laugh again.

Sven looked around some more, focusing on the redcaps. Bloody Nick stood a few feet away, eyeing the troll with sadistic glee. The redcap's expression overflowed with spite, and the perpetual

grin where Sven had long ago cleaved away a portion of Nick's face seemed somehow more feral.

"Ain't you lookin' pretty, me bucko. Ain't you quite the sight! It's true what they say; the deeper into the Dreaming you go, the more your faerie form reveals itself. Why, if you weren't presently strapped to a tree, I might even think about being scairt of ye."

Sven forced his other eye open, grunting as the crusted blood finally gave way. The cool night air burned like fire against the orb, but he could still see. That was a plus.

The troll strained his arms and sought to free himself from his bonds. He stopped immediately when he heard Magda's scream.

Bloody Nick laughed, revealing the rest of his iron-colored teeth. "I'd not do that, laddie. You'll only hurt the wench I've locked on the other side of the tree."

"Magda?" Sven's voice sounded different to his own ears, deeper, more powerful. A rumble of thunder in a coming storm. "Madga? Are you hurt?"

Nick came closer, and patted Sven's face, though he was careful to avoid the troll's mouth. Sven heard Magda whimper from the other side of the tree they had been chained to. "Don't you worry your pretty little self. She's all right for now. We may be a hungry lot, but we're not swine. We know how to ration our supplies."

For a moment, Sven allowed himself to relax just a fraction. Mailanka, Dmitri, Magda, all alive. Then he tightened, looking around, straining his neck muscles as he tried to find his other friend.

Bloody Nick roared with wicked humor, his entire body shaking



and tears forming at the corners of his eyes. For the first time, Sven noticed that Nick's cap was wet, bloody. "That's right, old son. Now you're getting the picture! I was wondering how long ye'd take to notice one of your lot was missing!" The redcap laughed harder still, great gales of mirth that shook the trees around them.

Sven looked around again, calling out for his friend. "Walter! Where are you lad? Where've you hidden yourself?" He wanted desperately to hear the boggan's voice: slightly nervous, shaken, even injured would be a wonderful sound. Instead, there were only Bloody Nick's guffaws and the sound of the other redcaps joining in.

"Oh, laddie, I wisht I had me a camera to take a picture of that face you're makin'." The redcap slapped a companionable hand against Sven's shoulder and squeezed with what seemed genuine affection. "Aye, but it's a sight I know many would pay to see."

"I'LL KILL YOU!" Sven roared, his vision blurring red.

Nick leaped back, holding one hand out in a warding gesture. "Careful Sven, you'll hurt your precious friend if you break those chains. I know for a fact she'd never survive the strain. Wrapped them links around her neck myself, I did." As if to emphasize Nick's point, Magda cried out again, tortured by the strain Sven put on their bonds. The troll relented immediately, silently cursing the murderer before him.

"Y'know what I like best about the Far Dreaming, lad?" Bloody

Nick came closer, his eyes glittering with dark amusement. "We can be ourselves here. We can follow our true nature and never worry for a second. There's no Banality that can make us sick or weak in the Far Realms." He paused a moment to wipe spittle from the gaping hole where no skin covered his teeth. Sven studied the redcap, noticing that he, too, was more than what he had been. He was stronger, darker and overall a more frightening figure. Nick wiped blood from his brow as it trickled down from his cap. Then he licked the blood from his hand. "We don't have to feel so restrained, if ye unnerstand what I'm saying."

Sven felt the chains around his wrist tighten, though he didn't dare move a muscle. Afraid that Nick might notice, he sought to draw the murderer's attention. "What did you do with Walter, you bastard?"

Bloody Nick put on as innocent a face as he could muster, his bloodshot eyes wide with false sincerity. "Why, nothin' that didn't come natural. T'wasn't me what cut him apart, but I confess I got the best pickings." The redcap stepped directly up to Sven, inches separating their faces. "I ate the little bugger. Me and my mates had us a feast." He stepped away again, a wide, nasty smile plastered across his frightening visage. "But I saved the best part for you, old son. The very finest morsel."





Nick reached into a small bag at his hip. The leather sack dripped red tears. When his hand came out, it held a bloody lump of meat and gristle. "I saved you the heart, Sven. And I'll make you a deal." Bloody Nick ran his black tongue over his exposed teeth, obviously savoring the taste of victory. "You eat this little morsel, here and now, and I'll let the rest of your mates go. I'll still kill you either way, but at least ye'll die with your honor intact."

Sven opened his mouth to issue a curse. Before the words could pass his lips, the chains around his wrists dropped to the ground, rattling and chattering as they fell. Bloody Nick's eyes grew very, very wide. The redcap tried to step back, fear making his face even uglier than usual.

The words fell away from Sven's mouth, unuttered and unneeded. Sven stepped forward, his hands clutching at the air and wanting nothing more than the feel of Nick breaking between them.

Bloody Nick stepped back hastily, even as his own men realized the gravity of the situation. "Bloody 'ell! The troll's busted free!"

The redcaps scrambled to stand, grabbing their weapons and knocking aside whatever they'd plundered from the downed ship.

Sven grinned with unholy ferocity. "Now you die. All of you," he said, and the redcaps knew fear.

## Geography of the Far Dreaming

The Dreaming changes the deeper you go beyond its borders. As the influence of humanity's consciousness fades, as the more powerful dreams present themselves, the Dreaming becomes more unreal. The Dream Realm called the Far Dreaming no longer holds any reflection of the Flesh World and surrenders instead to the endless possibilities of the imagination. The Far Dreaming is undiluted by banal influences, though it, too, is created by mortal dreams.

The Far Dreaming is home to many of the collective dreams of humans. There are even more Stable Points here than in the Near Dreaming, and they change less often than the structures and shapes of those dreams closest to the human heart.

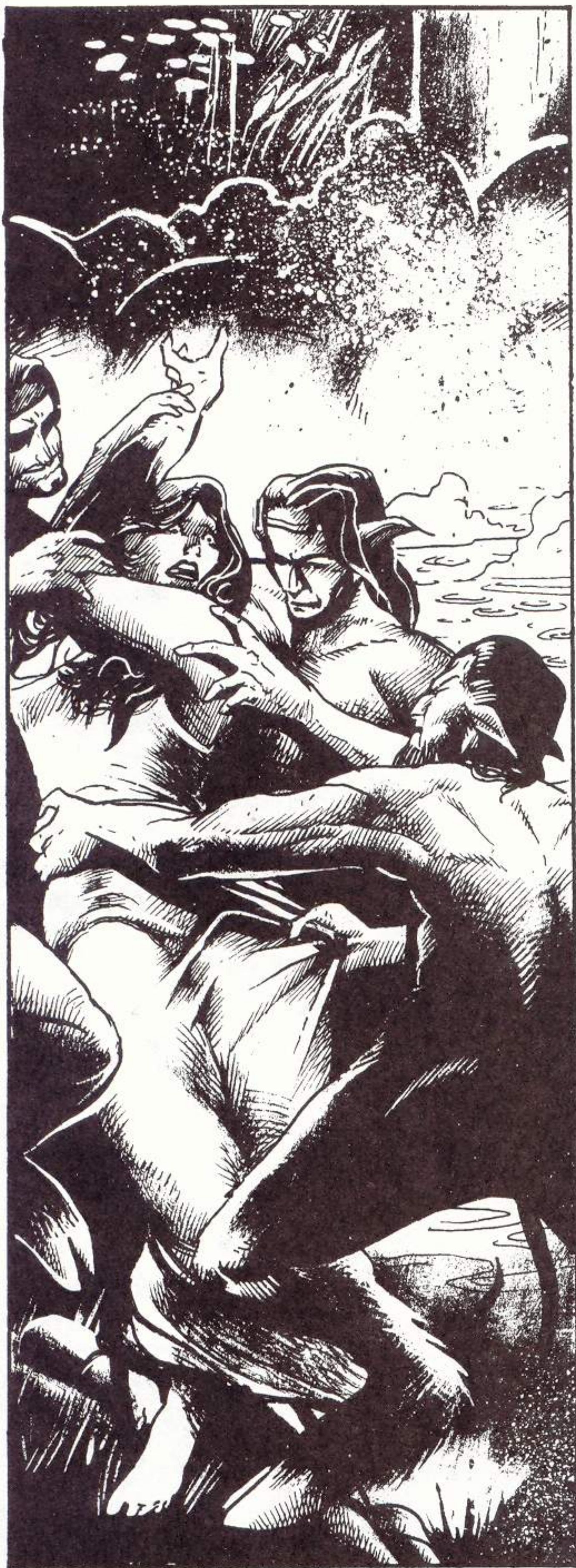
The Far Dreaming is less fragmented by the Shattering than the Near Dreaming. The bubbles of Dreamstuff that forge the Dream Realms here are larger and often more ponderous, less volatile. Although the trods are less frequent here, they still occur and still breathe life into the ever-changing reality of the Dreaming.

The Far Dreaming is closer to the true power of dreams, older and far more established than the Near Dreaming. Most of the ideas within this region are hundreds or even thousands of years old, established in the time before the Shattering, when anything was still possible. The chimera of the Far Dreaming are more likely to be dragons and manticores than simple images of lost loves and bullies who terrorized us when we were young. The Dream Realms truly hold a part of the Mythic Age within them and still have the strength to alter changelings who journey into their depths.

Although there is no correlation between the Far Dreaming and the waking world, the two still bear many similarities. The weather here is less mercurial than in the Near Dreaming, though far more powerful in its essence. A wind that might blow gently in the Near Dreaming fairly howls through the







trees of the Far Dreaming. Further removed from human influence, the mountains and streams of the Far Dreaming are larger than life, harsher to cross and purer.

There's mystery to the Far Dreaming. Far fewer changelings ever dare the forests and glens here than risk the ones in the Near Realms. Even those sidhe who've traveled the Far Dreaming repeatedly sense the difference in the very air they breathe. Here, the Kithain are closer to the source from which they all came so long ago, so many lifetimes in the past.

Between the Near Dreaming and the Far is a place called the Vale of Mists. No matter how a changeling passes into the Far Dreaming, she inevitably passes through the Vale. This mystic border is a part of the Dreaming's natural defenses and cannot be bypassed, not even by the most powerful Kithain or mortal mages.

### Entering the Far Dreaming

The ways into the Far Dreaming are limited. Under normal circumstances, the only way to enter the Far Dreaming is by following a trod from the Near Dreaming or a Path of Balor from one of the Umbrae. Even the trods beneath the waters of the Seas of Dream lead to the Far Dreaming eventually, though the course is often a longer one than anyone ever expects.

There are, however, other, accidental ways to get here. Chimera from the Far Dreaming often move through the Mists to seek entertainment or food in the Near Dreaming, where prey is less deadly and easier to capture. Several Kithain have found themselves on a one-way trip to the Far Dreaming in the claws of a dragon or the talons of a roc.

On rare occasions, the Firchlís can push a changeling into the Far Dreaming. This occurs only if a changeling stumbles off a trod or when a Kithain is trapped in a Madness Realm. Individuals who end up in the Far Dreaming in this way often find themselves just as lost as they were before and perhaps in far greater danger. Every threat found in the Near Dreaming is a hundred times worse in the Far.

The last way to get to the Far Dreaming is to fall into the realm. Many Kithain try their hands at flying in the Dreaming, where Banality can't destroy their creations and threaten their lives. Even the meekest of changelings understands that the Dreaming allows wonders as a matter of course, and the chance to ride a flying carpet or sail in a flying ship is a temptation too great to resist. Sudden storms brought on by the Firchlís can send changelings who travel by such means spiraling from the Near to the Far Dreaming with ease, even if the closest entrance to the Far Dreaming is hundreds of leagues away. As with all cases in which the Kithain fail to reach the Far Dreaming by way of a trod, there's no guarantee of survival for an airborne Kithain suddenly whisked into the Far Realms.

### The Ways of the Far Dreaming

Beyond the Vale of Mists, the Far Dreaming awaits, ready to embrace the fae like lost children. Many changelings find a few unexpected surprises when they arrive here.

The first of the Far Dreaming's surprises is the return of



## The Chrysalis Revisited

The Mists protect changelings from Banality more than they ever realize. What they see as a curse — the loss of memories and the disparities in time itself — are actually a blessing. Even minds as open as those of the fae aren't designed to remember the glories of the Far Dreaming. Left with their memories of the Dreaming intact, most Kithain would feel Banality's cold poison more than they do already.

When a changeling enters the Far Dreaming, the Mists of Forgetfulness part to reveal even more of his past. These returning memories are fragmented still, but they hold hints and clues as to the lives a changeling lived in earlier times.

This second layer of restored memories is almost as overwhelming as the First Chrysalis, though no changeling has ever been driven insane by the returning memories. Most of what is recalled comes in snippets and pieces. No one can learn "forgotten" Arts and Realms as a result of passing through the Second Chrysalis. They might more clearly recall once having known other Arts and Realms, but the recollection does not deliver with it the skills necessary to use such abilities.

Secrets can still be relearned, nonetheless. In some cases, memories of where a Kithain hid something in another life return upon emergence from the Second Chrysalis. The locations of ancestral swords or items of power can return in an instant, as can lengthy episodes from past lives. These remembrances often leave a changeling dazed for several minutes, as he collects his thoughts and sorts through the onslaught of old memories made new. Once again, there is a serious risk of ancient rivalries and loves resurfacing, both of which can make life far more difficult for a questing motley.

What the Dreaming gives, it also takes back. New memories are lost when the Kithain leaves the Far Dreaming and passes again through the Mists of Forgetfulness. Unless a changeling writes down notes about what is remembered, nothing can be recalled after leaving the Far Dreaming. Sometimes, even written notes will fade away upon leaving the Twilight Realm. The Dreaming is very protective of the knowledge it holds, and it works in subtle but powerful ways to defend itself against Banality.

Kithain memories, of experiences from previous lives, which come back in flashes and fleeting images. This experience is almost as powerful as the Chrysalis and is often called the Second Chrysalis to reflect that knowledge.

## The Augmen

*"There was somethin wild that crep into her face, Dave —*

*something wild and something free, and it frightened my heart. She was beautiful, and I was took with love for her, anyone would have been, any man anyway, and maybe any woman too, but I was scairt of her too, because she looked like she'd kill you if her eye left the road and fell on you and she decided to love you back."*

— Stephen King, "Mrs. Todd's Shortcut"

Changelings who enter the Far Dreaming go through physical and mental changes as they pass farther from the effects of mortal Banality. What makes them Kithain becomes stronger, more defined in the Far Dreaming. The term the fae give this metamorphosis is the Augmen.

The Augmen is not an immediate change. It takes place over the course of hours or even days, depending on the Glamour within a changeling.

The Augmen has its effect on mortals, too. While it draws forth more of the fae nature in changelings, it dims more of the human mind. Belief in another world beyond the Dreaming fades quickly, as the Mythic Realm reveals its secrets for the human visitor to see. In this way, the Mists are kind; any mortal who truly saw the Far Dreaming in all its glory would likely be stuck blind and deaf. There are things that humans were not meant to know.

The physical changes are usually the most obvious, though the mental alterations are normally noticeable to individuals closest to a fae who goes through the Augmen. Below are examples of how the Augmen affects the different kith.

### Boggans

Boggans become less human in appearance as they enter the Far Dreaming. In a short span of time, their faces grow darker, and their hair grows longer. Whatever clothes they wore when they entered are transformed, becoming more Spartan and practical. Whatever calluses they might bear become heavier, increasing the toughness of their skin. Boggans of a kinder mien seem softer and grow heavier as they move through the Far Dreaming. Ones of a crueller nature, the vindictive and spiteful, grow leaner and seem almost reptilian in features, though their skin remains alternately soft and callused. Most of the latter also develop mouths filled with sharp, needlelike fangs.

Boggans tend to become either more helpful or more spiteful (depending upon their Court) while in the Far Dreaming. Their friends often find the kith preparing all the meals and even setting up camp for the night. The vindictive boggans tend to make more acid comments and do their best to make everyone around them suffer. The boggans can no more stop this behavior than they can survive without their hearts — an option sometimes considered by their fellow travelers in the depths of the Far Dreaming.

- The **Craftwork** Birthright increases subtly. If unobserved, boggans can accomplish any task involving simple physical labor in one-sixth the time it would take a mortal, one-third the time if they are observed.

- The **Social Dynamics** Birthright no longer requires a die roll. The boggans' ability to understand group dynamics is far more powerful, though it might still take them a while to puzzle out the details.



• **Call of the Needy** is a true bane in the Far Dreaming. Here, a boggan cannot resist aiding people in need, unless he spends a Willpower point.

## Eshu

Eshu in the Far Dreaming grow stronger, taller and more capable of traveling by foot even than in their "normal" seeming. Their energy increases, and often even the oldest grumps among them can outrun the finest steed. Their faces grow wilder, taking on characteristics of the animals in all the lands they've visited. While the transformation is subtle, the changes are still very noticeable. Finally, the eyes of eshu change in the Far Dreaming and become darker than before. Individuals who stare into the eyes of an eshu in the Far Dreaming often grow mesmerized, imagining — or perhaps not imagining — that they can see the places where the eshu has traveled reflected in those dark, luminous eyes. The wanderlust that drives the eshu ever forward soon becomes a near-obsession. In some cases, the eshu can no longer stand to remain in one place for more than an hour, even if the rest of his motley is exhausted and can't go any further. Most solve this problem by circling their friends, guarding them as the eshu burn the energy that lends constant restlessness.

• The **Spirit Pathways Birthright** grows much stronger in

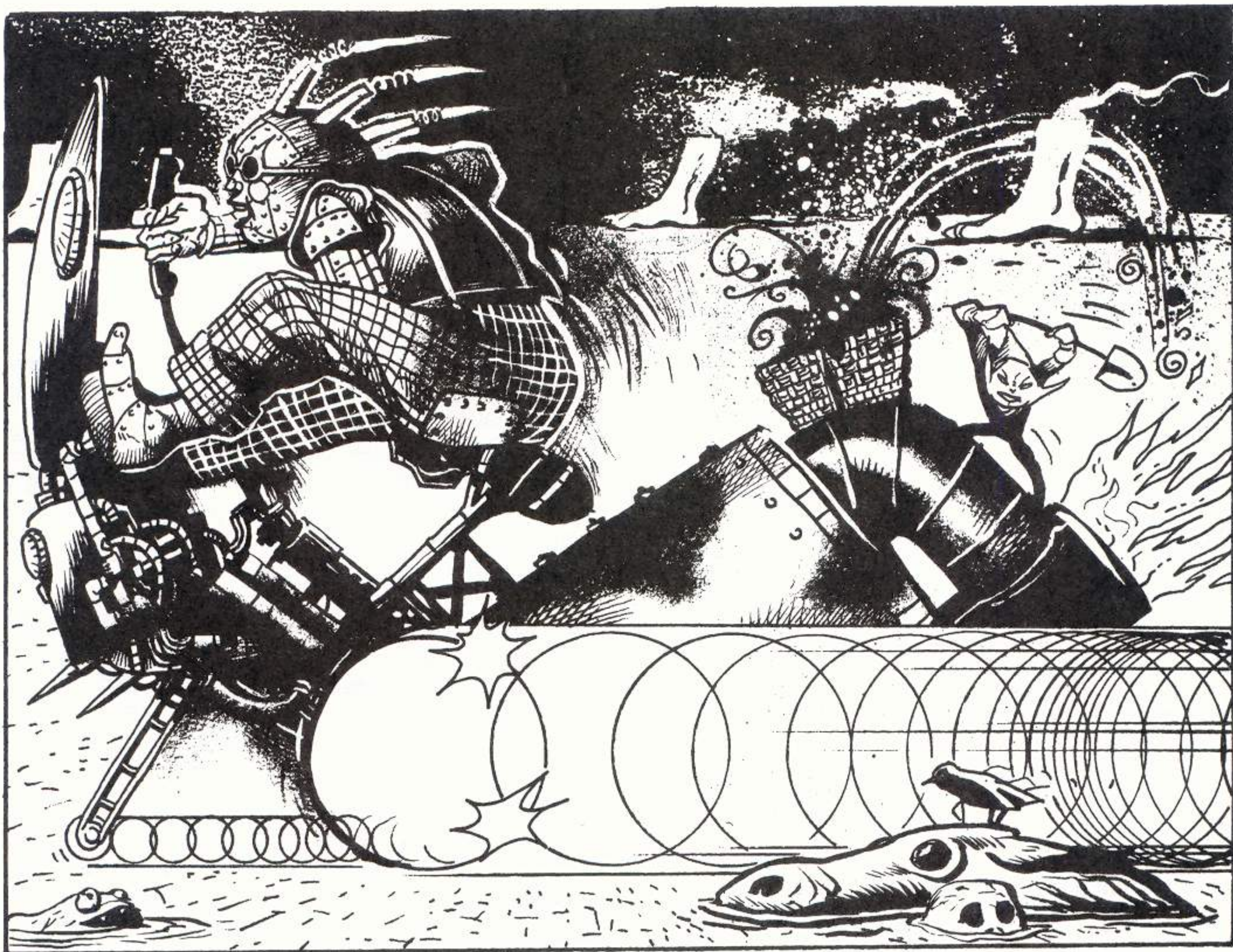
the Far Dreaming. The Eshu know when danger is near, though not necessarily what the source of that danger is. Also, they are always able to find the closest trod, should they stray away from the Shining Path.

• The **Talecraft Birthright** grows powerful to the level of distraction. Eshu telling tales in the Far Dreaming actually generate chimera to act out parts of the story being told. Once the tale is finished, the chimera disappear.

• **Recklessness** here means an eshu cannot resist a challenge, fair or unfair, without expending a Willpower point.

## Nockers

While in the Far Dreaming, nockers tend to become reflections of their creative bent. Ones who work with metals begin to take on characteristics of metal; their faces grow more angular, and their eyes tend to glisten with a metallic sheen. Some even gain a voice that is hollow and echoes ever so faintly. Even the hair of nockers can become more wiry, thicker and metallic. Likewise, ones who work mostly with wood begin to take on the characteristics of their chosen material. They develop skin textures not unlike the grain of wood or sometimes barklike and hard as oak. Nockers who work with multiple substances often take on subtler characteristics of all their different materials.





Manynockers are driven to the edge of madness in the Far Dreaming. Ideas that were barely concepts in the backs of their minds soon become detailed designs, and the nockers often find themselves distracted by the flow of creativity. During their time in the Far Realms, most nockers *must* create something, anything. Even while walking with their companions, they tend to find something to whittle or form with their hands.

- The **Chimera Creation** Birthright requires only half the normal successes needed on die rolls to complete the task.
- The **Fix-It-All** Birthright no longer requires any rolls. A nocker can fix anything, though they must still take time to figure out just what they're working on before they can fix it.
- The **Flaws** Frailty is a source of disaster for the nockers. Everything they build is flawed, and in the Far Dreaming their creations are also fragile. Any Crafts roll without at least one 10 rolled means the item will shatter if dropped or struck.

## Pooka

The changes in pooka are hardly subtle. The farther these Kithain travel into the Far Dreaming, the less human they appear. Their bone structure, the coloration of their skin and even the texture of their hair take on more bestial qualities, matching up more closely to their animal affinities. A rabbit pooka might develop a light coating of fur, and the color of his hair would change to match the fur of his rabbit form. A cat pooka would develop claws and rounder teeth, even as her eyes developed more catlike proportions and her senses grew keener.

Pooka grow more secretive in the Far Dreaming; they also grow simultaneously more enchanting and more annoying. Where the occasional prank might be enough under normal circumstances, the pooka seem unable to resist untying boot straps or cutting most of the way through the hardened wood of a bow. Anything for a laugh, sometimes without regard for the consequences. Their lies also become larger as ridiculous exaggeration and blatant falsehoods abound. But their energy is, if anything, even more infectious. Everyone around them in the Far Dreaming manages almost never to take offense at the pooka: They're just too damned cute.

- The **Shapechanging** Birthright no longer requires that a pooka be alone to change shapes. Additionally, the pooka may change the size of his animal form, anywhere from one-third its usual dimensions to three times larger than normal. Five-foot-tall bunnies aren't all that unusual in the Far realms.
- The **Confidant** Birthright is stronger as well. The difficulty for getting a target to spill his guts is now only one-half the target's Willpower (round down).
- **Lies** is the Frailty for Pooka, and in the Far Dreaming it is amplified. They no longer believe what anyone tells them; even if they know they're being told the truth, they can't accept what they hear as anything but a lie.

## Redcaps

Redcaps are born of nightmare, and their appearance changes to match their birthplace as they delve deeper into the Far Dreaming. Their skin, already rough, soon resembles the texture

of coarse sandpaper, and their massive teeth grow sharper and more menacing, often taking on a color similar to iron or granite. Whatever color their hair normally is, the Dreaming soon paints it blood red. The ragged nails on their hands grow thicker, capable of rending flesh without need of a weapon.

Most disturbing of all, their appetites increase, leaving the redcaps perpetually hungry for fresh, raw meat. Seelie and Unseelie redcaps alike soon start to suffer for their dark appetites, as they long to indulge in the bloody treats they enjoyed before the Shattering.

- The redcaps' notorious **Dark Appetite** Birthright is changed in hellish ways. The mouths of redcaps grow impossibly wide, allowing them to sink their teeth into much larger items. Their preference for raw, bloody meat is also increased, and though they can eat anything, the redcaps begin to crave the meat of fresh kills the way a heroin addict wants a fix. If deprived of fresh meat for more than a day, the redcap must make a Willpower roll to avoid "just taking a nibble" from the closest target.

- The **Bully Browbeat** Birthright is much stronger in the Far Dreaming. Difficulties on all Intimidation rolls are reduced by four or more. The difficulty to resist this ability increases by two.

- The redcaps' **Bad Attitude** becomes even worse, as their true nature is revealed for all to see in the Far Dreaming. Even the kindest of Seelie redcaps can't resist the taste of hot, raw meat and fresh blood in the Far Realms. In any social situation except browbeating, the redcap suffers a penalty of +4 or more.

## Satyrs

The satyrs change in ways more subtle than most changelings. The bestial aspects of their bodies are only slightly increased, but they exude an intoxicating musk that makes members of the opposite sex weak in the knees. The fur on their legs grows thicker, and their hooves become more pronounced. The horns on their head inevitably grow longer, in the case of grumps often curling back into ramlike bludgeons. Perhaps most unsettling of all, their eyes take on a goatlike quality, lending an alien attraction to their glance. Satyrs also grow more energetic in the Far Dreaming. Their legs grow more powerful and their running speed is doubled.

The satyrs' sexual drive is always increased while in the Far Dreaming, which is a frightening concept for many fae. Likewise, their sexual attraction is increased substantially. Even changelings who can't tolerate a particular satyr's behavior under normal circumstances have trouble concentrating on anything but the desire to get intimate with the very fae who annoys them.

- The **Gift of Pan** Birthright no longer requires that the satyr actually use a musical instrument or sing. Satyrs can stir the carnal desires of others merely by willing it, though there is still a chance that others can resist the **Gift of Pan** with a Willpower roll (difficulty 8).

- A satyr's **Physical Prowess** Birthright now grants +2 to their Stamina and doubles their already incredible running speed (50 yards +6 times their Dexterity).

- **Passion's Curse** becomes even stronger for satyrs, as



they are even more prone to mood swings in the Far Dreaming. The difficulty to resist temptation or to maintain self control is increased by an additional two (+4 total), more if intoxicated.

## Sidhe

The transformation of the sidhe when they enter the Far Dreaming is no more subtle than a monsoon. Where once they were beautiful to the point of distraction, here their mien inspires awe and fear. Theirs is the beauty of a lightning strike: brighter than the eyes can stand and capable of burning any who stand too close. The eyes of the sidhe emanate a raw power that is enough to stop almost any chimera from getting too close. Even the strongest Kithain finds himself both drawn to look at the sidhe and simultaneously afraid of attracting their attention. Despite this overwhelming beauty, the sidhe become far less human in appearance. Their eyes grow larger, their ears more pronounced and their faces, in general, more angular. Seen in the Far Dreaming, no sidhe could be confused for a mere mortal, even from a thousand feet away.

The voices of the sidhe tend to carry farther, echoing with an authority that none can easily deny. In the Far Dreaming, few changelings dare risk challenging a sidhe's commands. Whatever their usual personalities, the sidhe always grow more aloof. The differences between nobles and commoners becomes painfully apparent. Were it not for their overwhelming presence in the Far Dreaming, there's a very real chance the commoner fae would kill the sidhe for their attitudes alone.

- The **Awe and Beauty** Birthright of the sidhe increases enormously. The Appearance of the sidhe is increased by an additional two dots (total of 4), which usually takes them well above the normal maximum Trait of 5. The difficulties of all Social rolls involving Intimidation are reduced by four. Anyone attempting to attack an angry sidhe must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8; higher against particularly powerful lords or ladies) or back down.

- The **Noble Bearing** Birthright reaches a new level in the Far Dreaming. Cantrips that would make a highborn look foolish immediately backfire, striking the caster.

- **Banality's Curse** has no effect on the sidhe in the Far Dreaming. As Banality can't survive in the Far Dreaming, it is replaced by the Frailty **Empathic Blindness**: All sidhe suffer a +2 difficulty on all empathy rolls involving commoners. While in the Far Dreaming, the sidhe, regardless of their normal tendencies, have trouble comprehending the wants and needs of the commoners and see them as less-than-equals. A sidhe can still hide this lack of empathy behind proper decorum, but all Social rolls that require understanding suffer the same +2 difficulty.

## Sluagh

The sluagh, like the redcaps, were born of nightmare, not dream. They too become more hideous in the Far Dreaming. Skin once pallid begins to resemble the flesh of a corpse, one freshly pulled from a watery grave. Hair already lifeless often grows gravemold. The dead, flat eyes of the sluagh often develop cauls of pasty gray. While the cauls don't affect the sluagh's ability to see,

they tend to strike fear in those foolish enough to stare into them. Those few unfortunate enough to remember the experience of trading gazes with a sluagh in the Far Dreaming swear they could see the moment of their own demise in that lifeless glance. A pungent odor of decay permeates the air around the sluagh, and a decidedly unsettling gurgle develops in their speech. It's not uncommon for the sluagh to dribble a constant stream of murky water from their mouths, or for tears of the same to spill from their eyes. The fingers of the sluagh often gain webbing, as do their toes. Their frail-seeming bodies grow thinner still, and the bones beneath their flesh grow more flexible, until they can literally bend them like rubber.

There is no known restraint that can bind a sluagh in the Far Realms. No door can bar them from entry. Magic is the only barrier they can't slip through with ease. The sluagh grow more secretive in the Far Dreaming, and far less trusting, even of their closest friends. They tend to revel in the fear they generate and often go out of their way to terrify all who travel with them.

- The **Squirm** Birthright is more effective in the Far Dreaming. The sluagh can now contort his body into shapes that should be physically impossible. Nothing short of magical bonds can hold a sluagh against his will. No rolls are required, though escaping from very complex bonds could still take a turn or two. Additionally, the sluagh's bones simply cannot be broken. They're too flexible to permit structural damage.

- The **Sharpened Senses** of a sluagh are increased. A sluagh can see what would normally be invisible with a successful Perception roll, and all Perception and Alertness rolls are reduced in difficulty by four.

- The **Curse of Silence** affects sluagh to such a degree that, in the Far Dreaming, they can't be heard at all. Their voices disappear almost completely. The only way they can communicate is to write down what they want to say or pantomime what they wish to convey. Of course, other sluagh can still hear them due to their **Sharpened Senses**.

## Trolls

The trolls have always been called giants. In the Far Dreaming, the reason for that appellation becomes obvious. Every troll grows taller and broader, often increasing their height and width by as much as two feet. The pale blue of their skin darkens, and their hair often turns as white as fresh-fallen snow. Many trolls in the Far Dreaming actually generate cold and exude plumes of frosty breath, even in the warmest conditions. All that is noble in the trolls' demeanor becomes more evident, even as the beastly aspects of their faces grow more pronounced. The tiny horns on their heads grow larger and in some cases form into antlers; their jaws extend and their faces take on decidedly lupine features, growing longer and sprouting even larger teeth; some even grow a coarse white fur across their arms and chests. Despite this last change, there is no mistaking a troll in the Far Dreaming for a werewolf. The Garou are decidedly smaller.

Trolls tend to be more militaristic in the Far Dreaming and more protective of their charges. It's not uncommon for trolls



to restrain anyone they see as their responsibility, and even to go so far as to bind such a person with ropes or shackles, to ensure he can't wander off and hurt himself. Anyone coming near the people under a troll's protection better have damn good credentials; the giants are likely to kill them otherwise, because you can never be too safe.

- The trolls' **Titan's Power** Birthright grants two additional dots of Strength and two free Bruised Health Levels, while grumps gain two more dots of Strength and two more free Bruised Health Levels.

- The trolls' **Stubbornness** Birthright grants +4 dice to all Willpower rolls of a troll in service.

- A troll's **Bond of Duty** is more like the chains of slavery in the Far Dreaming. No troll can rest well while under oath in the Far Realms. The thought that they might fail in their oaths drives them to extremes, and all trolls suffer from paranoia while under oath. Breaking an oath still reduces the troll's Titan's Power Birthright.

### Rules of the Far Dreaming

In addition to those rules changes described above, the Far Dreaming has some other interesting effects upon changelings that are described here.

- All effects described in **Chapter One** are still in effect while characters are in the Far Dreaming.

- Cantrips are even easier to cast while in the Far Realms. All cantrips are considered Wyrd, but no cantrip *requires* the use of Glamour to cast (though Glamour can still be spent to lower difficulties, etc.). Additionally, the difficulty for casting all cantrips is lowered by two, with a minimum difficulty of 2.

- Temporary Glamour replenishes at a rate of one per hour for as long as a changeling remains in the Far Dreaming. Food and drink can occasionally restore temporary Glamour as well, at the Storyteller's discretion.

## Mortals in the Far Dreaming

On occasion, though very rarely, mortals and even some supernaturals manage to enter the Far Dreaming. Only a few can survive the perils of the Near Dreaming actually to reach this far into the Mythic Realm. Any who aren't simply driven mad by a world that adamantly refuses to follow their preconceptions often learn the hard way that trods tend not to work as well for them as they do for the Kithain.

The trods were created by the fae, and a certain natural affinity exists between them and the Silver Path that simply can't be duplicated. Mortals were never meant to venture on the trails made by Kithain powers. Trods seem to grow soft beneath mortal feet, unable to hold the weight of their mundane flesh. While trods

usually hold in the Near Dreaming, the farther into the Mythic Realm a mortal goes, the more likely that the Silver Path simply won't support their weight. Mortals enchanted by Kithain are the first exception to this rule. Once under enchantment, the Glamour that infuses the mortal protects him from the mundane nature of his existence, if only temporarily.

The only other exceptions to this rule are the rare mortals who experience the Chrysalis for the first time while physically in the Dreaming. Mortals who awaken to their faerie nature while in the Dreaming are a rare and wondrous sight. These lucky few do not suffer the ill side effects of the Chrysalis, as they are protected by the Mists of Forgetfulness. Most come into the full nature of their existence as if waking from a dream. Even after leaving the Dreaming, these fortunate Kithain suffer no ill effects beyond the usual risks all changelings endure while in the mundane world.

## Madness and the Dreaming

*The laws of the Flesh World do not apply within the Dreaming. The only rules that matter are the ones the Dreaming imposes. The proof of this simple fact lies in the nightmares that haunt even the most powerful mages. Even mages adept in the Mind Sphere have no sway in the Dreaming, where their knowledge, will and talent mean nothing.*

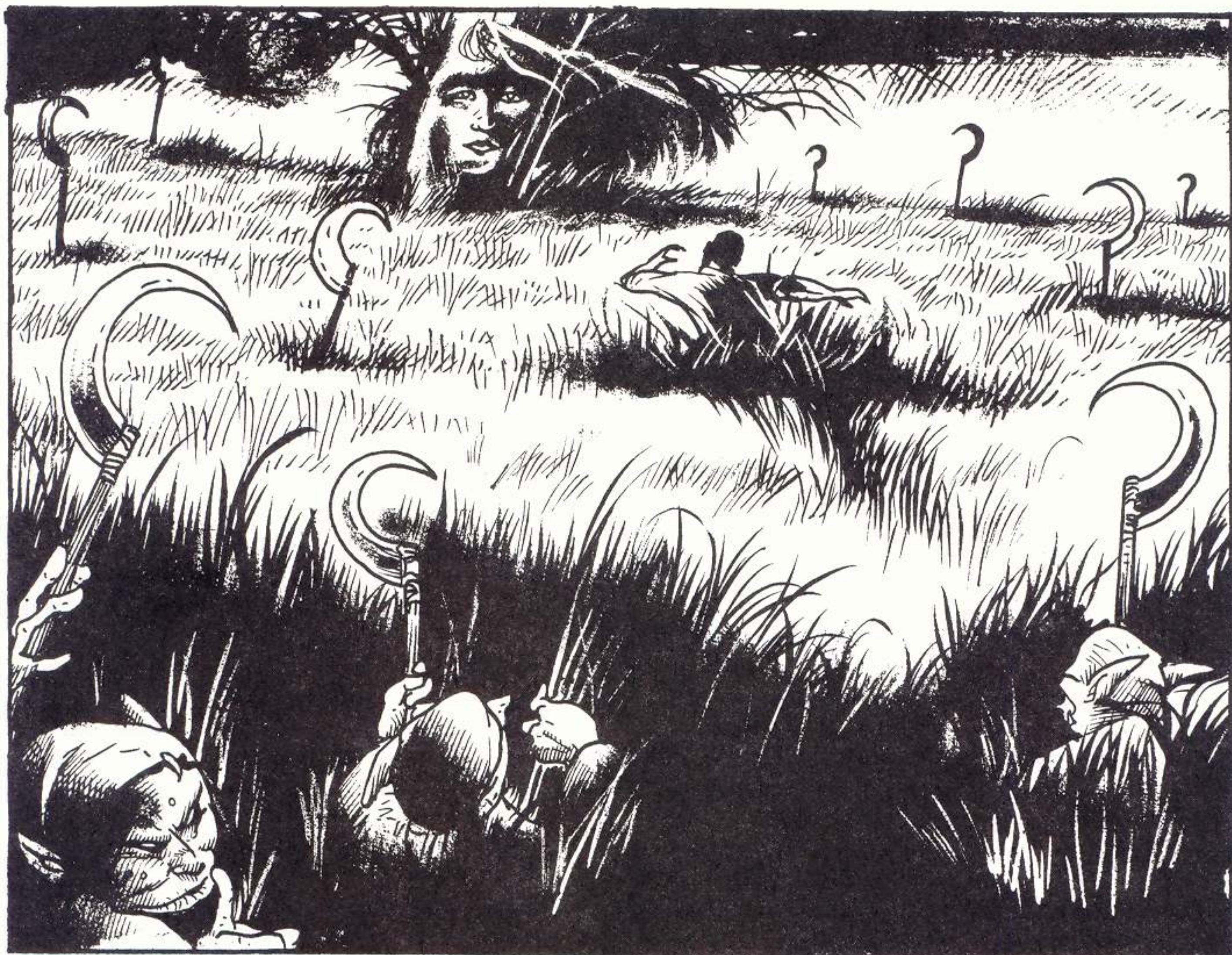
Humans, both Awakened and Sleeper alike, are somewhat familiar with the Dreaming. They visit it in their own way on a haphazard basis. They are inspired by what they see there and they are responsible for its existence. Even the mages of the Technocracy visit the Twilight Realm when they are truly asleep and their minds are drawn back to the childhood times they try so hard to forget — the times when they understood that Santa Claus was real and monsters lurked in their closets.

Most humans feel a certain sense of déjà vu upon entering the Dream Realms. They know they've been there before, but nothing is the least bit familiar. The Mists work on mortals, too, and are not as forgiving of mundane intruders. Despite the odd familiarity they feel upon entering the Near Dreaming, all of them also feel a sense of dread that reaches back to a time before the Shattering. Fae and human have seldom been friends. From time to time their paths crossed. Some Kithain treated these encounters as games and managed to remain surprisingly friendly (most notably the pooka and the boggans), but any illusion of friendship was just that: an illusion.

The Dreaming is created by the minds of mortals, but is far beyond mere human comprehension. It goes outside the beliefs of Jung, and light years past the concept of quantum physics. By its very nature, the Dreaming is, and will always remain, an enigma to the human mind.

Mortals encountering Garou suffer the Delirium, a genetic trigger that dates back to the time when werewolves culled human herds. When facing wraiths, they suffer the effects of the Fog, a tendency of the human mind to hide from certain truths too horrible to accept. Where ghosts are concerned, most humans simply rationalize away any blatant evidence that such things exist. Both of these reactions are defenses,





ways the human mind has of dealing with concepts too frightening to explore. Those humans with extremely high Willpower ratings are less affected by the Delirium and the Fog than most people are. They can control themselves, force themselves to remember what really happened.

Mages are “will workers.” By the very strength of their belief and their Willpower, they can alter reality to suit their needs, though they often have to pay a price for their actions. By their very nature, they are immune to the Fog and the Delirium, because of an enlightened state of mind that they refer to as being “Awakened.”

Mages can grasp the concept of the Dreaming, but they can never truly manage to accept the reality of it. The Mists of Forgetfulness see to that. The Delirium and the Fog are defenses of the mortal mind. The Mists are a defense of the Dreaming. Just as the Mists protect changelings by hiding from them the parts of their own psyches that could be damaged by Banality, the Mists protect the Dreaming from invaders who could do harm to its existence.

No Technomancer stands a chance against the Mists of Forgetfulness. Putting aside their high Banality levels, which work as barriers to stop them from gaining entry, the Mists

would assault their minds through their subconscious, through their connection to the Dreaming.

Reason is shattered by the very nature of the Dreaming. The Mists of Forgetfulness enforce that simple law of dream-physics. Reason must be surrendered, if only temporarily, or conscious mortal minds are not permitted to gain physical entry. Should the Mists ever fail to work their subtle influence on a mortal mind — for instance, on the mind of an Awakened human — the Dreaming responds in a more direct way.

Rational minds with the ability to resist the powers of the Mists are attacked by the Dreaming itself. No mortal, Awakened or not, has ever existed who can defy the Dreaming’s will. What cannot be removed by way of the Mists is removed otherwise. All who refuse to surrender their rational mind have it taken away from them. Permanently.

Mages simply cannot leave the Dreaming with more knowledge than they had when they entered. Despite their awesome abilities in the waking world, even the Awakened are susceptible to dreams.

Among the Oracles of the mages, this simple truth is sometimes postulated as the cause of the mad Awakened most commonly referred to as the Marauders.



There are other denizens of the Flesh Realms who, from time to time, attempt to reach the Dreaming. A few among the Garou and the Restless Dead have actually managed to enter the Mythic Realm. They, too, suffer the effects of the Mists. Vampires do not believe in the Dreaming. Perhaps the force which gives them their perpetual half-life also robs from them the ability to Dream. In either case, their Banality-ridden forms can't reach into the Mythic Realm: the Dreaming won't permit it. The only known exceptions are a few of the Malkavians, who seem capable, by virtue of their insanity, of entering the Dreaming.

It should be clarified here that the Mists of Forgetfulness do not eradicate the memories of beings who enter. Instead, they mute memory. Leaving the Far or Deep Dreaming is like waking up from a very deep sleep. The memories are there, but they're slippery. They fade quickly and seldom come back until a person returns to those realms. Most mortals who've been to the Dreaming are changed by the experience. Even though they don't consciously remember their travels, they feel the impact of them just the same.

## Places of Import in the Far Dreaming

There are Stable Points in the Far Dreaming, as in the Near, though the definition of "stable" is less clear in these cases. Most of these permanent structures still tend to move about and seldom remain in the same place for very long. The geography of the Far Dreaming is not as connected to the geography of the waking world as that of the Near Dreaming, though there are still certain constants. There are always oceans, mountains, forests, deserts and other aspects found in the Flesh Realm, but they are no longer dream-enhanced reflections of what humans see as reality. They are more fantastic in their scope, and likely to exceed anything found in the mundane reality of humans.

The places described here are simply locations and features that changelings traveling through the Far Realms are likely to encounter; in most cases, fae traveling through them take little notice of their features. Several of the actual realms of the Far Dreaming are described in detail in Chapter Four.





## The Vale of Mists

The Vale completely surrounds the Far Dreaming. It exists as a sphere around the entire Realm, flowing across the sky and beneath the ground. There is no way to bypass the Vale of Mists. In some places, the Vale is a noticeable thing, a wall of heavy clouds that is visible to the naked eye. In other places, there's no indication that the Vale exists, save when the Augmen takes its hold on Kithain and mortal alike.

## The Spawning Fields

While there are Spawning Fields in the Near Dreaming, they are faint imitations of the fountains of power that exist in the Far Realms. In the Far Dreaming, the Spawning Fields no longer generate chimera of all sorts. They seldom seem to create anything at all, though from time to time a True Creature of Myth is seen crawling from the centers of these Glamour-rich areas. Spawning Fields in the Far Dreaming are simply areas where Dreamstuff, the building block of all the Dreaming, is generated. Skilled Dream-Crafters are capable of creating almost anything from the flows of pure, untainted Glamour. Some have even managed to create sentient chimera, though whether the minds of these entities are created by

the Dream-Crafter or by the Spawning Fields is impossible to say. Surely, most of the animate chimera created from the Dreamstuff of Spawning Fields seem to have minds of their own, and few care what their "creators" want from them.

## The Great Forest

There is only one Forest in the Far Dreaming. Ancient, majestic and often filled with dangers, the Great Forest spans areas larger than any continent of the waking world. Every imaginable type of tree, both "real" and otherwise, exists here. The Great Forest even runs beneath the Slumbering Oceans and into other lands far beyond the sight of most Kithain.

The Great Forest can't be properly mapped, though certain landmarks within its nearly infinite expanse have earned names that are granted by the type of woods growing in a given area. Below are some of the hundreds of parts that make up the Great Forest.

## The Forest of Lies

The Forest of Lies runs in patterns too complex for most to comprehend. It always borders the division of the Far Dreaming and the Deep Dreaming. It was in the Forest of Lies





that Asterlan and his entourage did battle with the spiders of the Sighing Chasm. There is nothing good within the Forest of Lies. Everything here is dark and brooding, likely spawned by human fears of the forest primeval. The fruits borne by the ancient, gnarled trees of the forest are bitter and often poisonous to Kithain. The animals here are all predatory, and most grow to sizes that would make an army of trolls hesitate.

The most dangerous aspect of the Forest of Lies is that it seldom shows itself as it truly is, for that is its nature. The trees might seem vibrant with life, and pixies might roam across the flowering bushes that rest idle beneath the monolithic hardwoods. But what is seen is not what is real. The sweeter the picture, the greater the danger to any who dare step away from the Silver Path. To make matters worse, there are places where the Silver Path appears to divide, splitting into three, four or even a dozen different trods. In these cases there is seldom more than one that is the proper course to take. Many who enter the Forest of Lies come close to losing all hope, as the very clouds above spill rains that seem weighty with Banality, though the banal can't exist so far into the Dreaming.

The Forest of Lies is a Nightmare Realm, though it is far subtler than many. Some believe the very seat of Thallain power rests within the Forest of Lies, though only the Shadow Court might know the truth of the matter.

## The Discordant Woods

There is a place within the Great Forest where the bitterest memories resurface:

Though the fruit of the trees is sweet and nutritious  
Though the loam of the forest makes a comfortable bed  
Though the game in the woods is in plenty  
The Discordant Woods bring a silent dread.  
The Discordant Woods are lovely.

Within this peaceful forest, nearly all wants are satisfied. The animals of the woods thrive, and nary a moment goes by when the birds fail to sing an enchanting song. Bees in the woods don't sting, and the honey from their nests is sweeter, by far, than nectars found in the waking world.

There is only one problem: The woods awaken old hatreds for all who spend the night resting among the peace and plenty. Long-forgotten slights are remembered, and angry words are never forgiven, so long as one stays within the Discordant Woods.

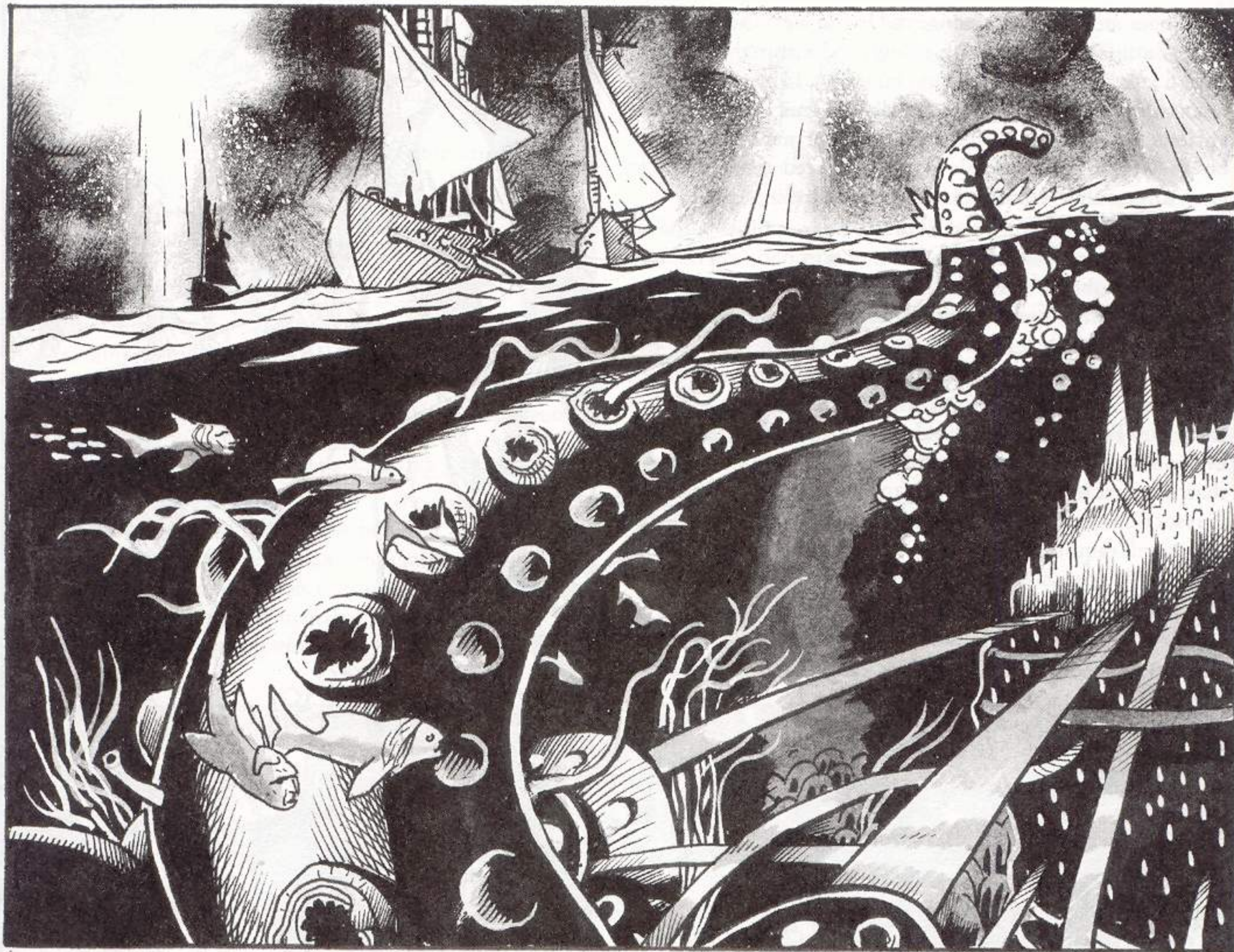
## The Resting Place

The Resting Place is, by long-standing tradition, the one area of the Great Forest where no one may harm another. One may kill game for sustenance, for there's always plenty of game. One may rest for as many days as one likes without fear of reprimand. Seelie and Unseelie alike respect and abide by this rule. Even the Thallain acknowledge the tradition, though some just barely.

Wounds heal faster here. Rain never falls and storms never rage. Although the Kithain might encounter ancient dragons known for their ill temper, they need not fear attack. It's not







uncommon for travelers from different areas to band together and talk, sharing wine and companionship where they would normally attack each other on sight. Many even choose to stay in the Resting Place for months or years, for every burden and every woe seems less important to anyone dwelling there.

## The Walking Trees

There are places in the Great Forest where the Walking Trees roam. The Walking Trees range in size, though many are massive. These trees bear some semblance to the redwoods, though the differences are many. The trees in these forests walk, lifting themselves from the ground to seek places where food is more plentiful. Slithering on their thick roots, they search for fresh meat to feed their hungers and satisfy their thirst for blood, which is the only liquid they drink.

When first approached, the Walking Trees remain motionless, save for the rattling of their branches and the shaking of their leaves. Many unwary travelers have failed to notice the swaying of their limbs, mistaking the cause of such motion for a gentle breeze.

Great parasitic vines live on many of the Walking Trees, draining them of vitality and stealing from their hosts the very

nourishment the trees need to survive. Where the vines flourish, the Walking Trees seem sickly, seldom having many leaves and often dropping great segments of their protective bark. Yet the vines are not lazy: When food comes close enough, they're likely to attack by wrapping themselves around unwary travelers and aiding their enslaved sources of food.

When struck by a weapon capable of biting through their thick outer layers, the trees and the vines both bleed a thick red sap. This sap is said to cure almost any ailment and, if left to dry in the sunlight, produces gems of great strength and beauty.

## The Splintered Mountains

The Splintered Mountains range across a thousand leagues and cut a bold path through the Dark Lands of the Far Dreaming. Here, the giants of legend and the monsters of yore make their homes and seek as sustenance any foolish enough to enter their domain. Harpies ride the frigid winds of the stone canyons, eager for changelings to torture, and basilisks lurk in the shadows of the broken towers. A great many Kithain have met their deaths in the Splintered Mountains, where, once, Tuatha de Danaan ruled in the time before the Shattering. There are treasures hidden away in the caves of the mountains,



and some believe the way to Arcadia can be found only by seeking those treasures that the Tuatha de Danaan abandoned when they left their now-ruined palaces. This may be lie or may be truth, but all the sidhe remember passing through the range of treacherous, thrusting stone towers on their way back to the waking world.

The dangers are great, but many believe the rewards are worth any risk.

### Arawn's Forge

There is a solitary mountain, black as a fomorian's heart, where Arawn once held his court. The sides of the mountain are as slick as wet glass, and the winds howling around the peaks prevent even dragons from flying close enough to land. The air is bitter cold, and a thick frost rime covers the surrounding lands. But in the darkness of night, there comes a glow from the center of the mountain that spills forth from a deep pit at the very pinnacle, countless leagues above the ground. The glow is bright enough to turn the bottoms of the clouds that always surround the loathsome place a bloody red.

Here, the Thallain believe, Arawn once devised great weapons of darkness, preparing for a time when Winter's embrace would be needed to stop the Tuatha de Danaan and the Seelie court. The Shadow Court wants the weapons they believe wait in the bowels of that mountain called Arawn's Forge. With those weapons, they remain convinced that Winter can be brought forth and, someday, Spring's return hastened.

The whispered legends say only the bravest and purest of heart can ever reach the top of the mountain. Only the noblest

can claim the crown of Arawn and the black sword called Winter's Heart. Although they've had no success, the Thallain still seek the one who can scale Arawn's Forge and bring to them the weapons of their destiny.

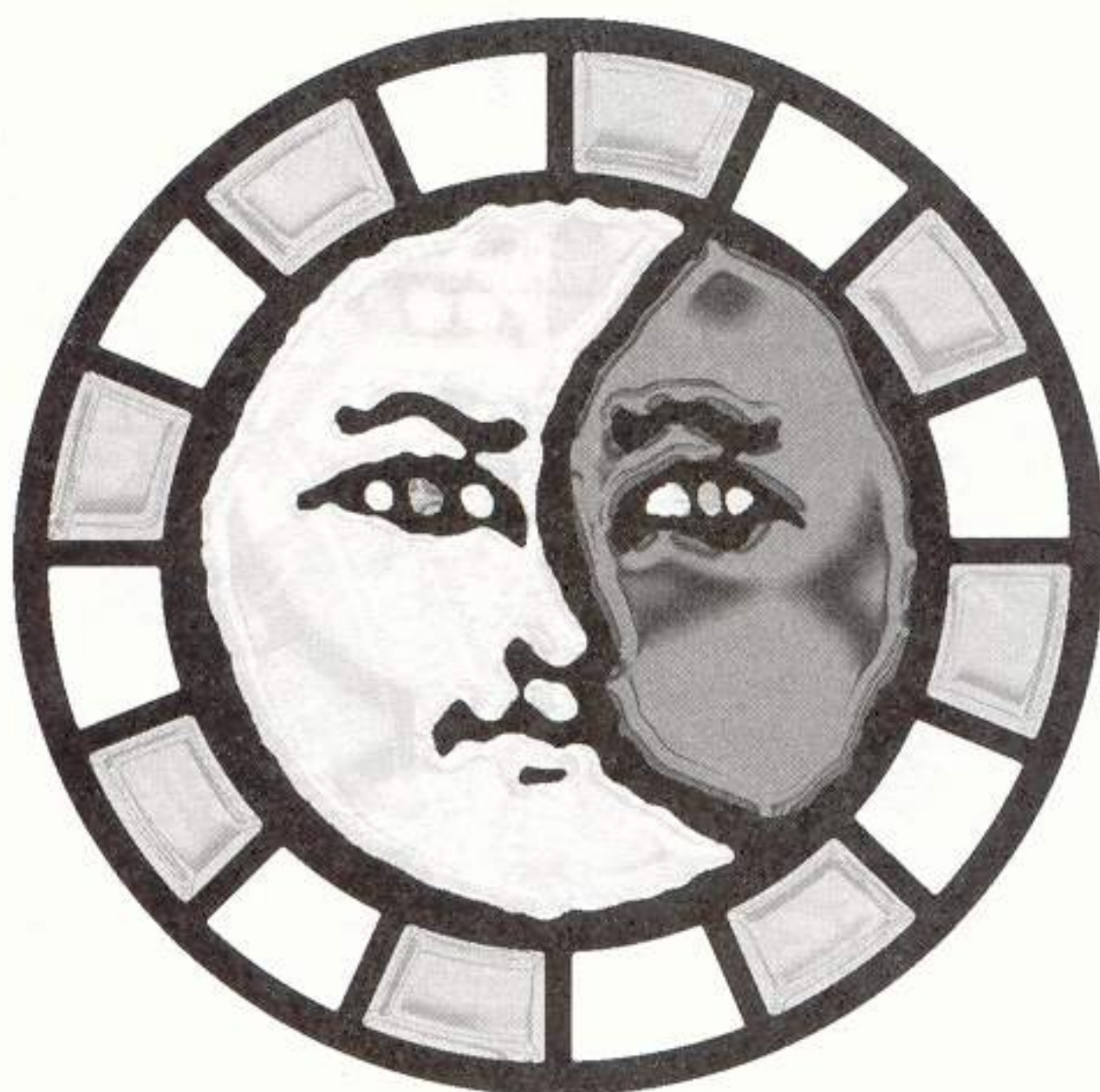
### The Sea of Sorrow

Far from the Great Forest lies a place where sand as fine as powder blows across a barren land and swallows all who dare try to cross its expanse. There is one trod that winds across this ocean of dust, stretching its Silver Path through the constant turbulence that often swallows the trod completely, before allowing it to shine again. The great sand waves are said to shred flesh with ease, leaving so little behind that even vultures can find no morsels worth noticing. The Sea of Sorrow holds its secrets well. No one has ever followed the Silver Path across this wasteland and returned to tell of what rests on the other side.

### The Slumbering Oceans

The great oceans of the Far Dreaming connect with both the Near Realms and the Deep Dreaming. The waters here are murky, too deep and dark to reveal their secrets. These great oceans stretch to other lands in the Dreaming, mysterious realms where no Kithain has ever gone. Some claim the Tuatha de Danaan took their ships and sailed across the Slumbering Oceans to return to the place whence they came, before the Dreaming was truly formed.

Great dark shapes move beneath the waves, and from time to time the tip of a shadowy tail breaks free of the waters. If one looks very carefully and concentrates, the trods beneath the waters reveal themselves.









# CHAPTER THREE: THE DEEP DREAMING

From the ground so far below them, they must have been a sight straight out of a Nightmare Realm: Their mounts moved through the air with a motion halfway between flying and slithering, and each carried a shadowy rider who looked scarcely human. The first rider was tall and athletic, with night-spawned hair that flowed wildly past his shoulders and scattered to the wind. Any who could have seen his eyes would surely have been lost in their infinite, black depths. Odd patterns of scar tissue ran across his ebony skin, tracing the stories of where he'd been for anyone who knew how to read them. Beside him, a creature with metallic skin and jeweled eyes rode in silence, her hands blurring at impossible speeds as she sculpted something with dimensions that numbered well beyond three. And on the last of the three clurroughs, a figure all too reminiscent of a medieval demon looked toward the ground a league beneath them. Powerful legs with cloven hooves straddled the flying nightmare, and eyes that promised a thousand pleasant sins followed a faint silvery trail far below.

Sven had fought with a brutal efficiency, felling over half the redcaps in under a minute. By the time the rest had brought him down, they'd been too wounded to fight any longer. Bloody Nick and the remainder of his gang ran away, leaving behind the bodies of their dead companions and several of their hellish mounts. They'd all seen the redcaps picking over Walter's remains, feasting on him without remorse. Two friends dead on a quest to save two friends: The

thought had left them all bitter.

Dmitri smiled whimsically, a thought occurring to him as he traced the trod Mailanka'd spotted earlier. "We shouldn't mourn them, you know. They're not really dead." The others remained silent, and after a moment he continued, undeterred by their lack of comment. "Walter and Sven are still alive. They're simply stuck in new forms. Changelings never really die, we just get born again in a new mortal body."

Magda spoke then, her voice sounding oddly hollow and musical. "Aye, we all saw the flames that claimed their souls and dragged them back to the waking world. They're alive again." Her voice carried well, despite the cold winds that whistled past Dmitri's ears.

Mailanka finished her comment for her. "We do not mourn the loss of their lives, Dmitri. We mourn the loss of them in our lives. For all that they continue, we may well never see them again."

They rode in silence for a very long time, each lost in contemplation of their quest and what it had already cost them.

Lost in the Dreaming with no sign of a trod anywhere near them, the group had agreed to take a calculated risk. They'd mounted the clurroughs and settled onto the rough, black saddles still strapped to the creatures' backs; Mailanka had been convinced that riding the backs of nightmares was a safer risk than trying to move through the Mythic Realm without the protection of the Silver Path beneath their





feet. The beasts had hissed and snapped, but hadn't stopped the Kithain from mounting. Despite their justified fear — for clurghaugh, much like the redcaps, love the taste of changeling flesh — they'd ridden the hideous creatures....

Once in the sky, they learned the error of their ways: The clurghaugh would not obey their commands. Wherever the creatures were taking the trio was their decision alone. How long they rode was anyone's guess. The sun set and rose, but they could scarcely tell. Below them, the ground changed again and again. They soared high over mountains the color of midnight and over plains of shattered rock, where the rivers that slipped across the broken land were the color of blood. Somewhere along the way, they changed too. Words could hardly describe their transformations. All were more fae than they'd been in a very long time. Mailanka's eyes grew sharper, and Dmitri continued his odd changes into a form closer to what satyrs of old must have been. Magda's hands moved constantly, and between them she molded something the others could not fully see.

They said little, speaking only when the silence was close to driving them mad. They hungered for warmth and food alike. There were no blankets or supplies on the beasts, and the only food was what the redcaps had left behind. Somehow, none of them felt the urge to test it.

During the darkest part of the seventh night, when they could no longer keep their eyes open, and when the eerie songs of their mounts were almost enough to make them scream, the ride suddenly ended. Dmitri noticed their descent first, and kept his silence lest he make the mad creatures change their minds and lift into the sky again. Despite their strange forms, the beasts landed gracefully. Within seconds of their settling to the ground, the three Kithain were off the clurghaugh's backs to stretch at last. Tight muscles and sore rumps were barely an inconvenience. They were glad, once again, to feel solid ground beneath their feet.

There was little doubt they'd landed in the Deep Dreaming. They could feel the changes wrought by the realm even more clearly than they could see the differences in their friends. Memories of distant times — centuries ago, when the world was still young and the Shattering was a long time off — flooded their minds as thoroughly as the unbridled beauty of the Dreaming dazzled their eyes.

They made camp, as the first hints of false dawn broke in the east, silhouetting the stark beauty of the stone landscape. Somehow, Mailanka found enough wood for a fire and managed to bag a wild pig for their meal. As they ate their first food in days, Dmitri felt his mood lighten, as if in conjunction with the rising sun. They mourned the deaths of their allies in their own ways, by telling tales of Sven's courage and Walter's unending kindness. Sometimes they wept, sometimes they laughed and sometimes they sat lost in their own recollections of absent friends. Throughout the brightening morning, which went on for several hours before the sun actually bothered to show itself, they feasted, talked and slept.

In his dreams, Dmitri found the Pool of Counted Sorrows and stared into its reflective depths. He saw the mistakes he'd made in his lifetimes and remembered the things he'd done right, as well. He remembered the women he'd loved and the men he'd battled, the men he'd cared for and the women who'd shattered his pride. He felt the weight of a hundred lives ended and the joy of a hundred-and-one lives lived. He recalled a thousand kisses and a hundred glorious



battles, relived betrayals at the hands of friends and salvation at the feet of his enemies. In his sleep, he wept and smiled, never making a sound.

And when he awoke, his mind was clearer than he could ever recall. Perhaps he'd actually been to the miraculous pool, perhaps it had been only a dream within a dream. Either way, he felt renewed in his purpose. When, at last, he opened his eyes, he saw Mailanka sitting atop a boulder a dozen feet away. The eshu's eyes stared beyond the barriers of the landscape, and his body swayed to a music only he could hear.

Dmitri smiled as the eshu turned to look at him with eyes as deep as the darkest part of the night. His smile broadened even more when he heard his friend speak: "I know where the Cup of Einhorn waits for us, and I know where we can find Mumpoker."

Dmitri rose to his hooves, striking the dirt of the forest from his back with quick, agitated gestures. "Then I think we should be on our way, my friend."

Magda spoke then, her voice sounding like notes from a flute played only by the wind. "Aye, Dmitri. We'll soon be about our business."

Mailanka spoke again, apparently unaware that the others had begun to pack their belongings. "And I know where Bloody Nick rests, soothing his wounds with the memories of how he killed Sven."

The three looked around, examining the pools of shadow that hid the western half of the mountains about them. "Oh do you then, dear Mailanka?" Dmitri's voice was as soft as a sluagh's in that moment. Still, the venom of his words sent shivers down the spines of his friends. "That's good to know, old friend. There's business I must discuss with that particular redcap. Bloody business and screams of pain."

The three gathered their belongings and began to walk, leaving the clurghaugh to their own devices.

They walked in silence, unified in the need to finish what they'd started. And where they walked, the chimera feared to tread....

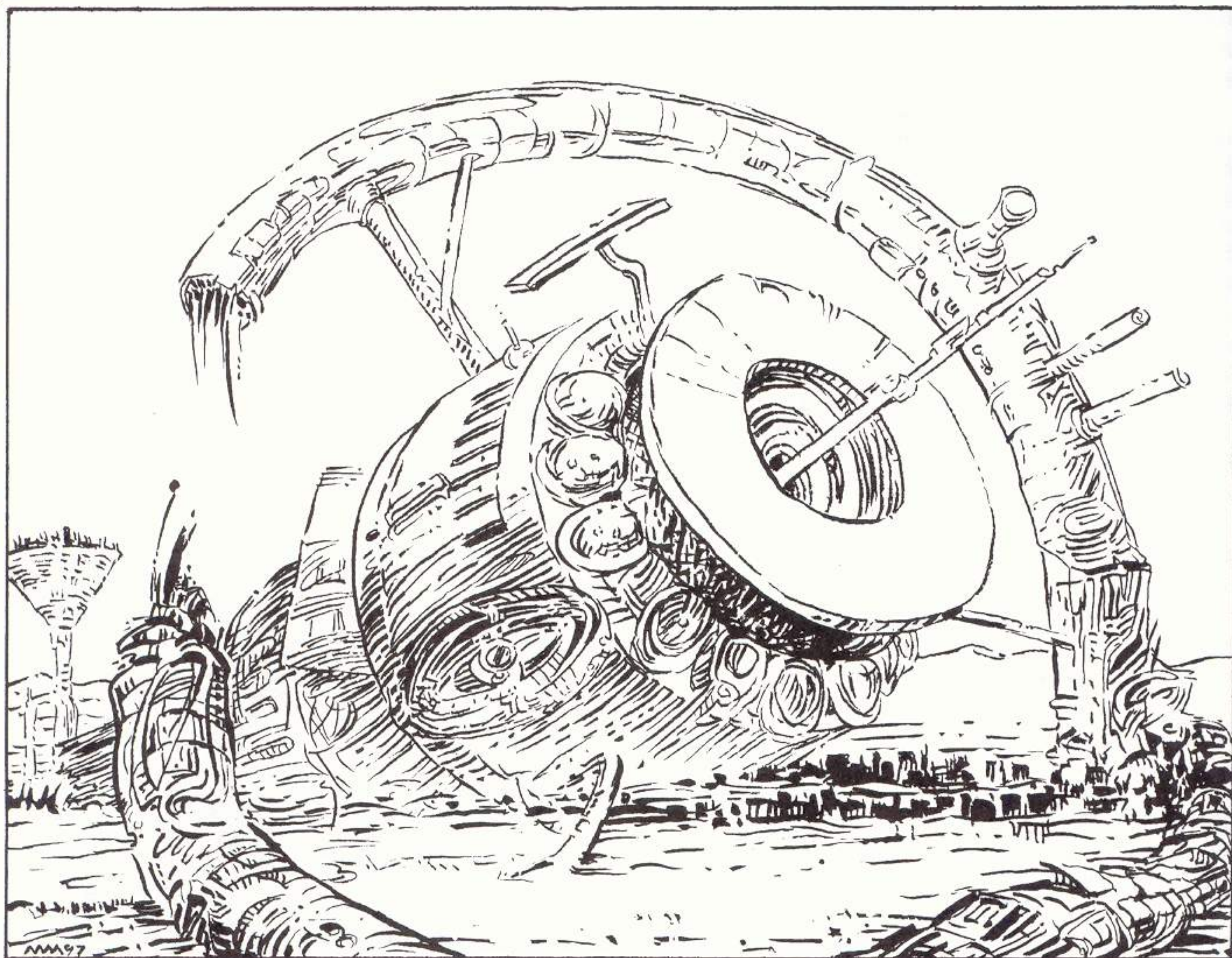
## Geography of the Deep Dreaming

One can no more properly describe the landscape of the Deep Dreaming than one can explain the texture of a rainbow. The Deep Dreaming is the very heart and soul of the Twilight Realm, the very essence of Glamour and the center of faerie power. Within its endless borders lies Arcadia, where the true fae still dwell.

Beyond the farthest reaches of imagination, on the steppes of fear, there are dark places where the Thallain gather to discuss how best to topple Arcadia. Within the depths of the ocean, Atlantis still stirs, and her denizens ponder what must lie beyond the shimmering edges of the great waters, in the place where people somehow manage to breathe air and live. In another part of the ocean, Ryujin, the Palace of the Dragon King, hides its secrets from all who would enter. Surrounded by the Palaces of Summer, Winter, Autumn and Spring and connected to them all by the Hall of Seasons, far beyond the Wastelands, where the trees resemble toadstools and the ground swallows whole the foolhardy, the Pool of Counted Sorrows







tells its secrets to Kithain who dare to listen. Past the ice fields of the Land of Endless Night, beneath the ruins of Great Engine, is the last message left by the Tuatha de Danaan for anyone who can understand the cryptic words and solve the final riddle that can bring the world back to right and return the Spring forevermore. All these places, and more, are in the Deep Dreaming, lost in an endless cyclone of miasmic colors and chimerical legends. They await anyone brave enough to find them and determined enough to survive the search. The trods to most of these places are locked, lost, or broken. Here, the chimera rule.

But there are other places, too: towns and cities where changelings have made their homes, after losing all hope of finding Arcadia; places where the Kithain do battle against the Thallain in an endless dance of carnage and destruction, rebirth and renewal; lands where the songs of the past still echo, and the rainbow finally ends.

The Deep Dreaming is the purest, most primal place changelings know. Mysteries and riddles of every imaginable sort await the proper answers, and puzzles long solved find new

ways to hide their secrets. The Silver Path is a faint memory in most of the Deep Dreaming, but the land is solid enough to hold a changeling walking here, just the same. There are no true boundaries to the Deep Dreaming. Every border exists there only for the present, until the time comes for new additions to build themselves. The Mythic World is strongest in this place, and the greatest legends of all dwell here, protected by the dreams of mortals who believe, only in their waking hours, that they've forgotten the days of giants. Mortals sleep and the Deep Dreaming is renewed in an endless cycle of change. Few places remain "in place," though many exist eternally.

## Entering the Deep Dreaming

There are only two ways for Kithain to enter the Deep Dreaming, and both require passage through the Mistweir, the final barrier of the Mists of Forgetfulness, the one that protects the Deep Dreaming from the waking world's Banality.

The first way is to follow one of the few remaining trods that reach as far as the Deep Dreaming. Even those changelings who fly on chimerical wings must follow the Silver Path in



order to find an entrance into the soul of the Dreaming. The second way is to follow a Path of Balor from one of the Deep Umbrae.

Any creature with a Banality rating higher than a six is barred from entering the Deep Dreaming. There are no exceptions.

## The Deep Dreaming and Changelings

There is no place where the Kithain are more powerful or more vulnerable to their own nature. The Deep Dreaming is the place where all the fae of all the lands were born. Glamour is so rich here that no changeling need ever fear running out of magic. The power of the Dreaming is so great, in fact, that the true nature of the Kithain is revealed for all to see. Here, trolls are truly giants, and the sidhe are so beautiful that they inspire terror in all who see them. The sluagh slip through the shadows of the Deep Dreaming, moving on currents of nightmare, and the nockers create wonders too incredible to exist anywhere else.

The rules are different in the Deep Dreaming. Arts and Realms work in ways never conceived of by changelings outside of the Deep Realms, and Birthrights and Frailties function constantly. Everything that is good and bad about the changelings is revealed for all to see — provided they know how to look, which is rare — and the memories of past lives stand revealed, if only for a moment.

## Remembrance in the Deep Dreaming

While the Mists are beneficial, they are not always kind. Kithain who already have a powerful connection to the Dreaming might rapidly discover they've got access to all of their past lives, all at once. In these cases, it's not as if the flood gates open, but more like the dam simply vanishing and releasing all the water at once. A character with a Remembrance Trait of 4 or higher must spend a point of Willpower or be overwhelmed by the impact. Even those changelings who don't have a high Remembrance normally find themselves stunned for a few moments as they try to sort through the memories washing back into them.

Pursuing others into the Deep Dreaming is a risky game at best. Someone who has had time to adjust might well plan an ambush for anyone following. The disorientation changelings feel after passing through the Mistweir is a perfect time to attack an enemy.

Also, as stated before, past associations that went unremembered in other realms come to light in the Deep Dreaming. An enemy who's sworn to destroy a character might change his mind when he recalls a time in another life, a time when the character was his closest ally or even saved him from certain doom. While the memories often fade as the characters leave the Deep Dreaming, the feelings awakened by the Mists some-

## Arts and Realms in the Deep Dreaming

The rules no longer apply in quite the same way when a changeling enters the Deep Dreaming. The Kithain are used to the ways of the waking world when they employ cantrips. Banality has had a profound effect on the ways Arts and Realms work in the Flesh Realm, and few changelings are prepared for the differences once they reach the heart of the Dreaming. Casual use of cantrips in the Deep Dreaming can often have results comparable to children playing with fully loaded assault rifles. The Deep Dreaming is a powder keg, and cantrips are often the fuse that lights the explosives.

Arts and Realms are not increased by the journey; a changeling doesn't suddenly know any more than she did before. She might have memories of past lives, but those memories are still too disjointed to increase the character's statistics along those lines. However, the Arts and Realms the Kithain does know become far more powerful and far more chaotic. It's virtually impossible to botch a dice roll in the Deep Dreaming (Storyteller's discretion, naturally) — at least for Kithain. Even with a botch, the character's powers will still have a profound effect, though not necessarily the one the caster intended. Paradoxically, the more successes a character rolls while employing her Arts and Realms, the greater the chance of getting entirely the wrong results.

A changeling casting the **Chicanery** cantrip: Haunted Heart might end up changing the emotions of everyone in a five-mile radius, or might accidentally enchant himself, rather than his original target. An Effigy created with the **Legerdemain** cantrip of the same name is more likely to be a full-blown and fairly powerful chimera with a mind and will of its own. The caster might want a perfect duplicate of a nearby rock and end up with a massive stone elemental, instead. Here, the Storyteller is expected to employ his imagination to the fullest.

Bunks are no longer needed to ensure success when casting a cantrip. Instead, the changeling might want to use bunks to have a better chance of actually doing what she intended to do from the start. For example, the simple **Wayfare** cantrip: Hopscotch is far wilder in the Deep Dreaming. A Kithain who meant to leap over a tree might very well find herself developing wings and sailing a thousand feet above the clouds, unless she uses a bunk to control her actions.

For the most part, cantrips aimed at another still have an effect on the target, but *what* that exact effect is may be entirely in the hands of the Storyteller. There are certain rules, however: cantrips cast by a changeling never cause that changeling direct harm unless a botch is rolled.





times linger. Deadly rivals sometimes come back to the waking world as close friends and stay that way.

## Glamour in the Deep Dreaming

Glamour in the Deep Dreaming is as pure as it gets. Untainted Dreamstuff flows constantly beneath the surface of the Mythic Realm, ready for anyone who can shape it to her will. The power of the Glamour here is enough to intoxicate changelings and dazzle mortals.

Nockers are particularly fond of the Dreamstuff found here. With it, they can create almost anything.

The Deep Dreaming is the richest source of Glamour known to the Kithain. It's not unusual for changelings to feed themselves on the Dreamstuff until they are gorged, so filled with Glamour that they almost break their connection to the waking world. The main problem with this sort of activity is

### Regaining Glamour

Obtaining Glamour in the Deep Dreaming is extremely easy. While in the Deep Dreaming, changelings naturally regain Glamour at a rate of one point per hour. Additionally, the permanent Glamour of all changelings increases by one for as long as the character remains in the Deep Dreaming (with a maximum rating of 10, of course). Any food eaten in the Deep Dreaming also supplies the character with Glamour. The amount of Glamour that can be gained in this fashion is determined by the Storyteller. This chimerical food loses its Glamour-granting powers as soon as it is removed from the Dreaming.

that it often promotes Bedlam when a changeling returns to the Mortal Realms.

## Banality in the Deep Dreaming

Banality is a disease to the Dreaming, a fact that is nowhere more evident than in the lands beyond the Mistweir. Each changeling carries within him a shred of Banality. It's this sliver of the mundane that bars changelings from Arcadia. Banal Shiver is evident from the moment they enter the Deep Dreaming. Where the Kithain walk, the ground blackens, save on the Silver Path, which protects the land. Trees touched by the Kithain are scorched as if by fire, and the very air around them sometimes smolders. While these blights are almost overlooked by the Kithain, they are noticed immediately by any true fae they should come across. For the changelings, there is no going home to Arcadia. Their presence near the closed gates would be the equivalent of an all-out assault in the eyes of the true fae. Most likely, Kithain would be attacked if they came within a league of the faerie homeland.

There are ways to obliterate completely all traces of Banality, but they are beyond rare. A changeling would have to wait centuries for the Mists to remove the Banal Shiver from her soul completely. It is likely, though, that by that time she



would be completely consumed by Bedlam.

## The Augmen Revisited

Just as the Augmen makes changes in Kithain who pass from the Near Dreaming into the Far, it also works its wonders as they go from the Far Dreaming into the Deep. The memories restored to changelings become a driving force that shifts the reality of their forms, as they drift farther and farther from the waking world and become what they once were and were always meant to be. The changes are seldom subtle; a Kithain's form becomes nearly unrecognizable, even to her friends.

While the abilities below might seem overwhelming, the reader should remember that each of these abilities is countered by other Kithain. The effects listed are indications of what happens to mortals who view changelings in the Deep Realms. With the exception of the sidhe, most changes are somewhat muted when employed against other Kithain. Also, the entities that dwell within the Deep Dreaming are powerful beyond comprehension, and even the most amazing abilities of the Kithain pale in comparison to what some denizens can do. The gods still walk in the Deep Realms, and the titans of yore make the greatest of the fae seem insignificant.

The changes listed below occur for changelings only. True fae do not suffer the same flaws as their Banality-tainted counterparts.

Beyond their significant changes in appearance, all Kithain in the Deep Dreaming increase their power in a more direct sense: The Arts and Realms of changelings in the Deep Dreaming expand again, by the same factor as they did in the Far Dreaming. Thus, a troll would gain a total of +4 additional Dots of Strength for the Birthright: Titan's Power and a total of +4 Bruised Health levels. No rolls of any sort are required for Birthrights in the Deep Dreaming, and all cantrips are automatically successful, if not necessarily in the ways the changeling casting them intended.

## BIRTHRIGHTS and Frailties in the Far Dreaming

### Boggans

- The **Craftwork** Birthright increases again. If unobserved, boggans can accomplish any task involving simple physical labor in one-twelfth the time it would take a mortal, one-eighth the time if they are observed.
- The **Social Dynamics** Birthright is far more powerful. Within minutes, the boggan knows who influences a group and how they manage to keep control.
- **Call of the Needy** requires that boggans aid anyone in need, regardless of the risk to themselves.

### Eshu

- The **Spirit Pathways** Birthright reaches its final height of power in the Deep Dreaming. With little more than a thought, an Eshu instinctively knows where the target of her quest lies. She knows when danger is near as well, but won't







care. It's the thrill of the chase that matters most.

- The **Talecraft** Birthright becomes an imposing force indeed. The eshu can generate chimera for any tale she spins, and the chimera can and often do interact with anyone around them. More often than not, these chimera are perfect representations of the tales told, right down to their personal habits. They are also sentient and might not want the tale to end. In the Deep Dreaming, the tale often escapes from the teller, and chaos sometimes ensues. These chimera act independently of the eshu once the story is finished; most wander off on their own, fully prepared to live out their new lives to the fullest.

- **Recklessness** goes to a new extreme. Any challenge, no matter how preposterous, must be accepted, though the eshu can delay the acceptance of the challenge if already on a quest.

## Nockers

- The **Chimera Creation** Birthright is automatic in the Deep Dreaming. No die rolls are required.

- The **Fix-It-All** Birthright not only fixes anything, it often improves on the original model. Nockers know intuitively what needs repairing, and they understand the function of anything they see. As always, repairing an item might take considerable time. More importantly, the nocker must concentrate, lest the item being repaired be "modified" until it becomes something else completely.

- The **Flaws** Frailty makes the nockers blind to the errors they make in creation. Whatever they build is sure to crumble within a few days, but while it works, it's likely to create miracles

## Pooka

- The **Shapechanging** Birthright allows the pooka to become any animal she can imagine. Shape and size are of no consequence. Pooka can become dragons here, if they so desire. The risk is great however, as many pooka opt never to change again and leave their motleys in search of a new life in their new forms.

- The **Confidant** Birthright allows the pooka to learn even the greatest secrets of a target with little effort. A die roll is no longer required, though the expenditure of a Willpower point allows the target of such trickery to stop speaking, once she realizes she's revealed too much.

- **Pooka Lies** become so complex that even the pooka have trouble untangling the tales they weave. No matter how complicated a lie already is, the pooka can't help but expand on the details. Also, pooka cannot trust anyone else and often go out of their way to avoid contact with other fae.

## Redcaps

- The redcaps' **Dark Appetite** Birthright is more a curse than a boon in the Deep realms. While they are capable of devouring a human in two bites, the redcaps remain unsated for as long as they stay in the Deep Dreaming. Fresh meat is a must, and anyone standing too close is a target. Redcaps don't want to eat other redcaps, but all other fae are fair game.

- The **Bully Browbeat** Birthright doubles again. Difficul-



ties on all Intimidation rolls are reduced by eight or more. The difficulty to resist the **Bully Browbeat** is increased by four.

- The redcaps' **Bad Attitude** causes all but the most forgiving individuals to loathe them on sight. Any redeeming characteristics are ignored by other fae, and the redcaps don't seem to mind that at all. In fact, they revel in the terror they inspire and thrill in crushing their enemies. No one is safe around a redcap in the Deep Dreaming, except for another redcap.

## Satyrs

- The **Gift of Pan** Birthright becomes a siren's song of temptation in the Deep Dreaming. The only way to overcome the power of the **Gift of Pan** is to spend one Willpower point.

- A satyr's **Physical Prowess** Birthright now adds +4 to their Stamina and doubles their running speed again (100 yards +12 times their Dexterity).

- The satyrs become complete hedonists in the Deep realms, forgetting everything but the need for physical gratification. Only after they've sated their lusts are they willing to go on to something else.

## Sidhe

- The **Awe and Beauty** Birthright of the sidhe is like the light of the sun. The Appearance of the sidhe is increased by an additional four dots (total of eight), making them painful to look at directly. All who see them are cowed, save for other sidhe, and resisting their commands requires one Willpower point per Scene. It is physically impossible to see a sidhe and attack her unprovoked.

- The **Noble Bearing** Birthright adds a powerful aura of light to the sidhe. They become nearly godlike in mien and terrifying to behold. Even powerful chimera fear to anger the sidhe in the Deep Realms.

- The sidhe give the commoner fae no more consideration than the average master does to a slave. The concept of equal rights simply doesn't exist. The sidhe Frailty: **Empathic Blindness** causes all sidhe, while in the Deep Dreaming, to suffer a +6 difficulty on all empathy rolls involving commoners.

## Sluagh

- The **Squirm** Birthright ensures that no barrier can stop the sluagh. While still susceptible to damage, they can transform themselves into a vapor or a liquid and drift through any opening, no matter how small. Sluagh may use their Glamour rating in dice to force their way through even magical barriers, and the very shadows become their open portals from one location to another.

- The **Sharpened Senses** of a sluagh increase to incredible levels. With a Perception + Wits roll, difficulty 4, they can tell when someone is lying. A sluagh can see through illusion automatically and, with a successful Perception roll, can read the thoughts of anyone they concentrate on. All their Perception and Alertness rolls are reduced in difficulty by six.

- Sluagh in the Deep Dreaming cannot be heard. Their attempts to make noise fail completely. Getting the attention

of other fae is often a monumental task for them.

## Trolls

- The trolls' **Titan's Power** Birthright grants two additional dots of Strength (+5 total) and two free Bruised Health Levels (+5 total), while grumps gain two more dots of Strength (+7 total) and two more free Bruised Health Levels (+7 total).

- The trolls' **Stubbornness** Birthright grants +6 dice, total, to all Willpower rolls of a troll in service.

- The trolls' **Bond of Duty** overwhelms all else. Their missions must be completed, regardless of the consequences. No troll can break an oath in the Deep Dreaming.

## Unenchanted in the Deep Dreaming

- No mortal can enter the Deep Dreaming without first being enchanted. The only exceptions are human mages, and even the Awakened Prodigals find the way difficult. Even if they succeed in breaking the Mistweir, they lose all recollections of the waking world unless they've been enchanted by changelings.

- Mortals viewing the Kithain in the Deep Dreaming suffer the full impact of the changes that the fae undergo. Seeing the changelings without the benefit of Glamour to protect them is enough to send even the bravest mortals fleeing in terror.

- Those Dreamers foolish enough to consume the foods they find in the Deep Dreaming are enchanted for an extra ten days per morsel consumed. Additionally, all suffer the results of being "fairy stroked": They lose all sense of self and often wander for months or years with no idea of who they are.

- Mortal magick has no effects in the Deep Dreaming. Whatever they attempt is certain to fail. The Dreaming tolerates no conscious mortal influences...unless they follow certain rules set forth within the heart of Arcadia.

## Arcadian Mortals

From time to time, a changeling returns from a quest for Arcadia with tales of humans possessing incredible powers. Such stories are thought to refer to Arcadian mortals, the humans who traded places with the sidhe and developed powers to rival the abilities of true fae. Although no one can say for certain what these powers might be, clearly they would have to be prodigious to allow mortals to hold their own against the faeries in the homeland of the Kithain. As no changeling has been to Arcadia since the time of Resurgence, there's no way to confirm or deny these rumors.

Many sidhe in the Deep Dreaming believe they can sense these mortal wizards. Perhaps there still remains a connection between these humans in Arcadia and the sidhe they displaced.

## Places of Import in the Deep Dreaming

Greatest of all the dreams of changelings is the desire to return





to the one place forbidden them, Arcadia. Although rumors abound of what Arcadia must surely look like and of the paradise that waits beyond its closed gates, no changeling, not even in the Deep Dreaming can truly say what makes the place so special.

## Arcadia

The few Kithain who've managed to reach Arcadia — or a fabulous realm they believed to be Arcadia — have found that all its entrances are sealed. Some foolhardy adventurers have tried to force the gates or fly over the massive walls surrounding the place. All have died in the attempt. As powerful as the changelings are while in the Deep Dreaming, the true fae are more powerful still. They are adept at using their Arts in the Deep Dreaming and suffer no loss of power as a result of Banality. Armies of true fae wait to stop all attackers and are prepared to kill their own to protect the one place left in their world that is free of the mundane. There can be no entry for the changelings, for, even from a great distance, the true fae can sense the Banal Shiver that burns shadows into the changelings' hearts and souls.

Changelings who come back from the Deep Dreaming with vague memories of Arcadia claim they sensed a grave threat from within the barred paradise. A few say the threat was something aimed at them, and others state with whispered dread that the threat was internal. Something bad has happened in Arcadia, if these changelings are correct. Something beyond mere misfortune, bordering on the catastrophic.

Although few dare speak the words, which come close to being heresy, some changelings are firm in their conviction that Arcadia has fallen. The one true home of the faerie is gone, they insist, destroyed from within. Followers of this belief point accusing fingers toward the sidhe who left, convinced that their expulsion led to the great city's downfall.

## The Mistweir

The Mistweir is the final barrier between the Deep Dreaming and the Far Dreaming. This great cloud is little more than a foot thick in some places and is miles deep in others. Along the great barrier, hamlets and towns of all sizes have cropped up over the centuries, peopled by commoner fae who claim they left Arcadia for places away from the sidhe. The greatest of these towns is called Fin Bheara, after the boggan who settled the land. Fin Bheara comprises all sorts of Kithain, even many sidhe who claim Arcadia was barred to them in the time of the Shattering.

The great castle in the center of Fin Bheara is ruled half the year by a dark-haired sidhe who claims she is the rightful heir to Arcadia's throne, and ruled the other half of the year by Fin Bheara himself. Seelie and Unseelie alike live here, following the old traditions long forgotten or ignored by the Kithain of the Flesh Realm. Politics is a deadly game in the great, old town, and strangers entering Fin Bheara are often caught in a quiet war between the Seelie and Unseelie courts.

The fae of Fin Bheara make no claims to be Arcadians, though they swear they know the way to the ancient homeland. Visitors are always welcomed, so long as they can obey the laws of the two rulers.



A hundred leagues away from Fin Bheara stands a collection of tents and pavilions called the Goblin Market. Treasures of incredible power and rarity are for sale in the market, as are delights and secrets beyond mortal understanding. The Goblin Market is ruled over by a dozen goblins and their redcap enforcers. All are welcome to enter the Goblin Market, so long as they have money or wares to trade. Not surprisingly, most of the wonders in the Goblin Market are of dubious origin. Some great treasures wait in the carnival atmosphere, but most of the items for sale bear little semblance to the items they claim to be. In last 50 years alone, 17 swords have been sold, all of which allegedly belonged to Cu Chulain. Few buyers were disappointed by the powers of these blades, but none can say with certainty that they received the weapon they paid for.

## The Wastelands

The Wastelands is a dark, miserable place where nightmares hold eternal sway. In this endless Nightmare Realm, the most twisted passions and fears of mortals fester and grow. Forests of toadstools and valleys filled with moist, poisonous lichen cover lands which once held palaces to rival Arcadia. In this place, the darkness is complete and the Thallain hold undeniable reign over the land. No sane changeling would dare visit this place, save for one simple fact: the Pool of Counted Sorrows rests in the center of the Wastelands. The Pool is said to reveal all of the past to anyone who can stand to gaze into its depths. Many changelings in the Deep Realms claim to have visions of the Pool of Counted Sorrows. It may only be a lie created by the rulers of the Nightmare Realm, or it may be something more. Some claim it is a possible way toward salvation for all of the Kithain.

## Great Engine

Beyond the barren icefields of Endless Night, where the ice giants dwell and use trolls as their personal slaves, there is a machine of extraordinary size. The Great Engine has always been where it rests. The Firchlís does not change the shape of the towering ruin, and the passage of eons have not caused the massive structure any harm. The Great Engine rests at an angle, motionless and silent. No wind blows where the machine waits. No living thing dwells in its shadow. It's rumored that, in the ruins of the structure that once held the Great Engine aloft, there is a final message from the Tuatha de Danaan. Many fae have made quests to answer the riddle of Great Engine: Some believe the message explains how the monolithic machine works. Some are certain the secret of how to bring about Eternal Spring is written there. Some even believe the message explains how to reach the Tuatha de Danaan, should the need ever arise.

Whatever the case, the message written in the shadow of the Great Engine remains a mystery. All attempts to memorize the words or write them down fail completely. Memories fade, and the written manuscripts are always lost. Fae who've made the trip all agree that the solving of this great riddle is extremely important and could easily take a century to accomplish. Sadly, beyond this simple truth lies a mystery that refuses to be solved. The Great Engine has remained in its present state for as long as any fae can recall, defying all who would resolve its secrets.







Steve Ellis '97



# CHAPTER FOUR: REALMS OF INTEREST

*Whatever is sacred, whatever is to remain sacred, must be  
clothed in mystery.*

—Stéphane Mallarmé

No list of the dominions to be found within the Dreaming could ever be comprehensive. Nor should one be, for the law of the Dreaming is simple: every mystery revealed and every secret told only leads to a fresh enigma, world without end.

And there are so many enigmas. There is a realm for every Dreamer, an entire interior universe locked deep within every human heart: realms of fear, realms of joy; realms of love, and innumerable realms of sorrow and regret. Some are transient, shimmering in and out of existence like visionary tricks of the light. Others gather gravity and being about themselves to become comparatively real for a little while. Twisting and turning in the dream-flux, they take on something approaching solidity.

This compendium includes an assortment of those latter realms, which, for whatever reason, have made themselves central to the Dreaming in contemporary times. They have gathered the hearts of the Dreaming to themselves, and their names are ever on the minds and lips of the sibyls of the Cat's Cradle and the Crystal Circle. Winter, Spring, and the rest of the fate of the Dreaming lie in these realms somehow; it remains to be determined how and why.

## The Vale of Mists

Just out of sight of the Near Dreaming, as one moves toward the deeper horizons, the first realms of the Far Dreaming appear. These lowingward dominions, perched on the edge of the known world, form a frontier region between the earthly geography and trivial epiphanies of the Near Dream and the Mythic Realms of the Far Dreaming proper. Here, in the transitional territories, the weight and crowded emptiness of the gray world dissolve, melting away like snow in the sun. This place is the Vale of Mists, the boundary between the world that is and the world that should have been.

Because the realms adjoining the Vale of the Mists are so heartbreakingly close to the Near Dreaming, they are, by far, the most popular destinations for changeling refugees fleeing Banality. It is easy to follow the nearward trods down into the lowingward fields and dales, and the characteristic dangers of these realms are small and relatively unthreatening to brave travelers. When Kithain brave or wise enough to travel into the Dreaming found their way here, they believed they had found a place that was not Arcadia, but was deep enough a paradise



for comfort. The result is obvious: Since the Opening, weary changelings are retreating to the Far Dreaming in increasing numbers and taking their leave of the cruel Earth. Here, they build their chimerical outposts and villages, their wayfarers' shelters and lonely inns.

Even Kithain who fled into the Dreaming in the last 30 years or so have grown strange and insular since abandoning the Earth. In each of the frontier holdings of tame Dream they've carved out of the rough wilds, the refugees have gone their own ways, isolating themselves from Earth and one another. Many have withdrawn into their own eternal games and habits and fallen into unique Bedlam states. Others, sadder because they are more desperate, struggle to impose their own order on the wilderness, which opens the way for Banality to follow them back into the Dreaming.

## The Doom of the Vale of Mists

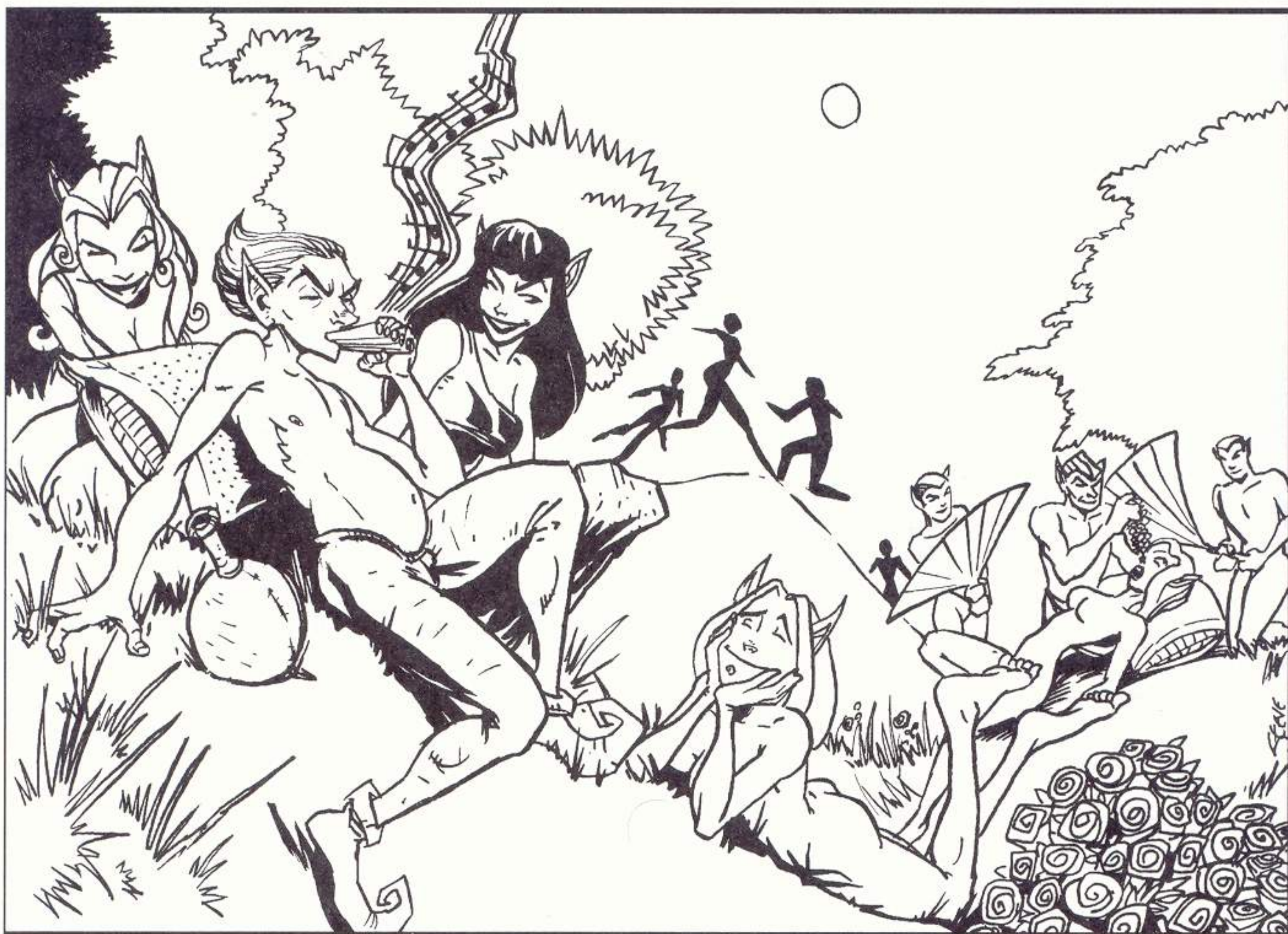
The weight of the refugee colonies is causing the lowingward realms to crumble, to rot away due to the newcomers' combined desperation and regret. Starting at the nearward edges of the Fields Behind and snaking along the trods into the Bullydales and the Low Dukedoms, Banality is deadening these regions of the Far Dreaming, forcing them to become increasingly indistinguishable from the Near Dreaming. The invisible spaces

drop away or are lost in the process, and manifestations of Glamour are "flattened," becoming more mundane and less exciting. In response, whole regions of the Nearward Realms have vanished from existence and left empty, aching spaces on the face of the Far Dreaming. Whether they have been unmade by Banality or simply forced to flee deeper into the Dreaming for survival is unclear.

Although truly banal regions are still exceptions and not yet the rule, it is increasingly difficult for changelings to feel entirely at home in these realms. Something always seems to be missing, even in the rustic comfort of the Fields or the frenzied chaos of Quox and Mux. Chimera and older colonists feel that something has been irretrievably lost or destroyed—that some quality of Glamour once indigenous to these dominions is gone forever. They tend to blame the more recent refugees for bringing the weight of Banality into their formerly safe havens.

The latecomers themselves simply feel a sense of vague loss, mingled with the bitter realization that, in this bleak century, not even the Far Dreaming is distant enough from the Earth to make them happy. The dream-countries fail to provide them satisfaction, and so, disappointed (or cast out by the chimera), they must retreat even deeper into the Dreaming.

Meanwhile, the chimerical inhabitants often make things worse by their attempts to minimize the damage. Rules, regu-





lations, and immigration quotas are contrary to the will of Glamour, and so Glamour withdraws from those colonies that seek to enforce such restrictions. Unfortunately, this diminishment only hardens the resolve of the rule-makers even further, provoking more rules, even greater isolation from Glamour and so forth.

Other changelings, in reaction to such restrictions, squander Glamour on an increasingly narrow range of pursuits. They become indistinguishable from true chimera themselves. These selfish, restrictive games are not as satisfying as they once were, and have instead grown tiresome, even (though no one would admit it) boring.

## The Fields Behind

Also known as “the Back of the Fields,” this transitional realm is the best known of the ones between the Near Dreaming and Far Dreaming. On their peripheries, the Fields Behind are quite similar to the rural towns and isolated communities that endure on Earth: a world of small but satisfying homesteads where everyone knows everyone and family runs deep. As one travels dreamward along the trods, however, the communities grow more eccentric and unlike their human counterparts.

Beyond the Vale, all signs of Banality disappear. Chimerical entities affiliated with the land and natural phenomena become more and more common. The trod-roads grow older, simpler and more derelict, eventually becoming unusable for vehicular travel. At this stage, the traveler knows that she has left the Near Dreaming behind and is now walking the Back of the Fields.

A small but important community of kinain has emigrated to the Fields Behind over the decades, some brought here by their Kithain relations as an alternative to death. Generally, the oldest ways and forms of the peasant lifestyle are preferred here over the ephemera of modern life — toward the deepward core of the Fields, even the kinain live the fairy-tale lifestyle of villages, cottagers and simple festivals in the midst of a boundless, wondrous wood.

Chimerical inhabitants of the Fields typically have taken leave of the Earth for more fully faerie communities. Most take little interest in earthly things, as the weight of time and death in that place saddens them. Some are eager to accept newcomers from the Nearward, welcoming them as fellow exiles; the occasional chimera even holds travelers, against their will and “for their own good,” in order to prevent the newcomers from wasting their lives on Earth. Others in the Fields struggle to keep their homes quarantined from all encroachment of the banal, and they do not take kindly to Nearward strangers who might bring the plague of time to their villages.

The Fields do not partake in politics, though particular sections of the Nearward periphery do pay fealty to the various lords and ladies of the earthbound realms. The true Fields Behind could be considered almost wholly commoner territories, ruled only by the oldest laws and traditions that bound the common folk and chimera alike before the return of the sidhe.

Noteworthy exceptions tend to be those chimerical towns that yearned for “proper” or “Earth-fashion” rule by sidhe or other truly fae suzerains. These towns organize quests to find nobles worthy enough to rule over them, and often kidnap or coerce likely candidates. The results never seem to make the townsfolk happy, though.

Most of those villages too sensible for this silliness are governed by Grandmothers, ancient chimerical (or Bedlam-bound) women who serve more as advisors than rulers.

## Mythic History of the Fields

There are few, if any, legends focusing on the Fields. Their proximity to the Flesh Realm has caused their history to be more tightly entangled with that of Earth than with that of the Dreaming. Except for accounts of the early lives of Arcadian heroes born in the Fields Behind, the epic histories of the Green and Black Compendia are silent about this faerie hinterland. The cataclysmic wars between the Arcadian Houses and between the sidhe and the fomorians had only minor effects out here on the periphery of the Dreaming, which is how the Fieldling Folk prefer it.

The nature of this realm excludes any appearance in it of the truly “epic” or the cosmically important; the Fields are not about the overarching events that shape history, but about the insignificant, homespun trivia that collect to form the everyday world of the Dreaming. If a humble, commoner faerie is born in today’s bleak times, the birthplace is most often somewhere in the Fields near Earth. If a simple but nourishing Dreamstuff must be harvested or Crafted, the Fieldlings are the likeliest providers — in fact, the secret recipes for the creation of truly nourishing faerie food (as opposed to the tasty but ultimately non-nutritious stuff commonly manufactured from Glamour) are unique to the Fields. The Fields Behind are homespun but hearty, unobtrusive but substantial, qualities that suit their inhabitants perfectly.

## The Voice of the Realm

Magically speaking, the Fields are strongly connected to the everyday rituals and tools of human peasant life. Treasures tend to include such things as butter churns, featherbeds and screwdrivers, and ceremonies tend to focus on food and handicrafts. Noteworthy natural affinities are the Cow and the Sow, vegetable magic (especially that pertaining to grains and other crops) and the weather. The Fieldling Folk are among the best chimerical weather-workers in the whole of the Dreaming and have many tricks and little spells for predicting rain and sun. Because birds tend to be antithetical to the Fields, the Scarecrow is a particularly common enchanted object, and many trods leading into the realm are guarded or otherwise inhabited by members of the tribe of Scarecrows.

## Dream Landscape

Because the Fields resist the creation of especially interesting sites, the realm itself appears remarkably homogeneous —



## The Sharpened Ears

These ritual daggers, used in the harvest festivals of the Fields Behind, come from specially treated ears of corn. During the festivals, candidates for the office of Season-King duel with these corn-daggers until one prevails; he then serves the Grandmother through the harvest until the following spring, when a new Season-King is chosen through another, more private method.

Use of the Sharpened Ears is not exclusive to harvest time, however, and most citizens of the Fields can season corn to give it a sharp edge. While the process does require the ears be treated from planting to harvest for best results, serviceable emergency weapons can be crafted in five minutes from supermarket corn. Would-be warriors of the realm tend to practice hard with Sharpened Ears throughout the year, to better their chances at the next festival.

Many find bearers of Sharpened Ears to be quite sexually attractive, and so the weapons are worn and wielded by most young changeling males (and females) who are interested in such things. Despite commonly held belief, women can both season and wield the Ears as well as anyone.

a vast patchwork of small homesteads, connected by dusty lanes and bounded on all sides by progressively wilder brambles and river gullies. From time to time, the homesteads cluster together into a faerie village or town, but the majority are isolated cottage holdings, inhabited by one or two extended families of commoner faeries.

In the Flesh Realm, the major geographic distinction in such an agrarian landscape would be that produced by crop diversification. However, the Fields resist such rational classifications. In an apparently nonsensical pattern that would be impossible closer to the earthly world, cornfields alternate with wheat fields, rice paddies, barley rows, and even those rare grains unique to the Dreaming.

However, it is, appropriately, in the fields that the true geographic wonder of the Fields presents itself in all its splendor. Each of the grain fields of the realm is a molded and flattened unique pattern of circles and spirals; together, they resemble nothing so much as agricultural hedge mazes or traditional knotwork. On festival nights, the Fieldlings gather to dance around these circles and weave from field to field, from spiral to spiral.

The Grandmothers say that these patterns represent the entire shape of the Dreaming, written in vegetation. They cite the similarity between the spirals and certain trod formations in the Irrgarten and elsewhere.

Of all the hearts of the Dreaming, the Fields feel most

intensely the weight of time and Banality. Vast tracts of this realm are continually being pulled down to the Earth, where they are incorporated into earthly reality or destroyed; the dispossessed Fieldlings crowd into neighboring territories and add to the refugee population, thus straining Fieldling society even further. The process is a vicious one, growing inexorably in speed and fury.

The most salient signs of this rot taking hold in a homestead are the appearance of television antennae and the disappearance of the crop patterns. Once these signs begin, only the wisest Fieldling can determine the quests required to heal the stead and preserve it from Banality.

## Fieldling Folk

As with the land, so with the native folk. The chimera who inhabit the Fields Behind tend to oppose the idea of fame or adventure; otherwise, they would have left their safe cottages in search of same. While there are local heroes and villains, wise folk and notorious fools, they are noteworthy only within their own immediate village — in the next town over, there

## Cows and Sows

The only important social distinction within the Fields is that between Cows and Sows. Difficult to explain to outsiders, Cows and Sows appear to fill, somewhat, the role of the Seelie-Unseelie dichotomy within the largely "Seelie" Fields, and to provide an arena for competition and social change. Membership in one faction or the other derives from a Fieldling's primary choice of livestock. Those homesteads that raise faerie cattle for meat and milk belong to the Cow and celebrate certain Cow festivals; those homesteads that raise faerie hogs belong to the Sow and adhere to the Sow calendar. While Cow-Sow affiliations rarely cause animosity or open conflict, members of each faction tend to socialize with "their own kind"; if asked, many will discuss the "obvious philosophical differences" between Cow and Sow at great length. Regardless, the two lifestyles appear nearly interchangeable to non-Fieldlings.

Perhaps the most important distinction between Cows and Sows in the autumnal dream of the current age is that the newcomers ("hippies") to the Fields tend to be Sows, while the oldest families tend to be Cows ("farmers"). In many of the Nearward villages, the recent influx of Sows has strained tempers, as the long-established Cows feel threatened and outnumbered by their rivals. Cows paint these new arrivals as destroyers of the simple environment that the Cows labored so long to build. Sows can expect to be treated with suspicion and even a degree of rudeness until they make their intentions known.



will be different names of renown, similar but unique in their own small ways. Grandmother Ella in one village is similar, but not identical to, Grandmother Eola in the next, and both are slightly different from Grandmother Elka in the third.

Magical personages common to the Fields include Scarecrows, Potatoheads and other Vegetable Folk, some Dolls and domestic animals, and an unlimited variety of Devis, giggly Shrubberlings, Zephyrs, Pebblings and other such small and spritely Edible People, each type governed by its own Little Parliament.

## The Bullydale Wastes

Past the Fields Behind, the trods grow treacherous, becoming less like roads and more like goat-paths or hunting trails. The faerie villages grow smaller and less common, thinning out until the traveler is alone but for a rude cottage here and yon. The cottagers themselves grow increasingly strange, and this is a region of cannibals, inverts, bandits and witches.

The landscape here tends toward the unknowable but malign depths of the uninhabited wilderness. Old oaks, brambles, and bogs encourage the traveler to keep to the path. In the dark, little nightmares and dreadlings breed, to serve as allies and tools (and often as raw materials) for the lonely faerie inhabitants of this place.

These are the Bullydales, also known as “the dark lands” or the “wild country” by Earthward changelings. Swamps alternate with blasted heaths; the proportions are off and everything is a bit unbalanced, but not overwhelmingly so. In other words, Bedlam. Eccentricity, pettiness, greed, short-sightedness and stupidity rule here.

A nasty, brutish place, the Bullydale (or, sometimes, Hitherdale) Wastes are linked to all creatures that survive through poison, theft and the eating of offal — hyenas, lizards, cuckoos, carnivorous plants. The realm’s dominant emotional affinity is endless, mindless hunger, which results in the common sight of Bullylings gnawing on one another out of boredom and mutual loathing. Smarter chimera often sublimate this hunger into greedy or hoarding behavior. They perform unspeakably petty and vindictive acts in the hope of being rewarded with gold or jewels, or even a tasty cut of meat or some wet leather. The props that are particularly affiliated with the Bullydales include crude implements of torture and intimidation, but generally extend to anything broken or discarded — the swampy ground of many areas of the Wastes is covered with piles of trash and other useless litter.

At various points, the Wastes completely sink into the bogs, utterly obscuring the trods. Here, local bandit tribes tend to camp, waiting in ambush for hapless travelers to lose the Path and become fair game. Other tribes simply block the Path at various strategic points, where they charge a toll that can range from the minor to the ridiculous. Apart from these bandit outposts, the Bullydales are a trackless maze of swamp trails and crude hovels interspersed with Unattended Birthday Parties and other lesser nightmares. Most Bullylings live alone out of a combination of miserliness, paranoia and self-loathing; as





such, settlements are scattered widely.

## The Lost Nursery Battalions

Lurking in the undergrowth, these now-renegade com-

mando units of the unending Nursery War are a constant menace to all non-Childlings. The Battalions are childling chimera who have gone feral after living their credo "No Fair to Grumps" too zealously and too long.

Wilders and grumps who dismiss the danger posed by the Nursery commandos should remember the incredible casualties inflicted by these Battalions upon all sides during the Accordance War. They have sharp teeth and know how to bite. They have pointed fingernails and know how to pull hair. They are geniuses at not playing fair with enemies of any size.

## CREATURES of the Squalid Terrain

Forgotten by the Arcadian courts (or perhaps it would be better to say "deliberately ignored"), the Bullydales have festered and grown unhealthily fat on their own selfishness since the beginning of time. The traveler experienced in the path through the Wastes is not surprised to learn that the Bullylings allied almost unanimously with the fomorians during the War of the Trees. While the world has changed several times since then, the traits that the fomorians exploited still run strong in the Bullying spirit: petty hubris, stupid greed and craven cowardice.

Still, the Bullylings seem to enjoy their corrupt lifestyles as outlaws, misers and bullies. Unseelie nobles often seek out Bullylings to use as suitably pliable lackeys and servants — in particular, the dwellers in the deepest parts of the Hither bogs are highly prized as the Unseeliest of all common chimera, with no Summer anywhere in their nature to destabilize their loyalties. Whether these nightmarish creatures are as mindlessly cruel as the legendary Bullying servants to the fomorians is an open question that nobody particularly cares to answer. Instead, the more pressing question is: Have the latter-day Bullylings (including horrible new breeds like Scarf Hounds and Kroupa) rejoined the service of the resurgent fomorians?

Best known as one of the primary spawning grounds for various nightmare chimera, the Bullydales appear to breed for infamy. Fortunately, the witches, pirates, bandit chiefs, cannibal monsters and incompetent nightmare races tend to pose even more of a danger to one another than to innocent travelers, ensuring that the unlucky victim of ambush will be able to play the locals against one another.

Unique among all the Bullylings, the local redcap population does not take perverse shame in its origins, nor does it partake in the otherwise universal stupidity and selfish greed that infests the realm. Admittedly, many Bullying redcaps are both stupid and selfish, but such behavior is less a cultural standard than a personal choice for them; a small but substantial number have actually proven themselves to be quite heroic and gracious faeries, despite their sordid background. These redcaps, in particular, tend to display a curious but stubborn pride in their native land. They neither apologize for its many faults, nor use it to excuse their own character failings. Instead, it is simply "home," the place where they are from.

## The Twelve Witches of the Marsh

Although the Bullydales are infested with evil witches of the minor sort, the Marsh Witches deserve special mention here for being foresighted enough to put aside their petty differences and form a loose mutual assistance society. While the other witches and miscellaneous creatures of the Wastes spend most of their time scheming against one another (or protecting against others' schemes), the Twelve are free to indulge their eccentric hobbies, each with the knowledge that, if she is attacked, she can summon her sisters.

All 12 Marsh Witches are exceptionally selfish, cold-hearted, and treacherous. Particularly noteworthy among them are Ootha, who practices the old exchange of magical favors for young and pretty body parts; Allhara the Virgin; Baktasha, known as a particularly experimental cook; and Lenoora, the legendary (and deeply Bedlam-bound) sidhe queen of the Hitherward Witches.

## Signs of Winter Approaching

It is a sad but understandable fact that most Kithain would not care if time and Banality crushed the Bullydales once and for all. After all, the realm is a breeding ground for monsters and criminals directed only by the schemes of witches and quite possibly by the fomorians themselves. Its destruction would be doing a service to everyone.

Still, the signs of Winter coming to the Bullydales are occasionally quite poignant, no matter how well-deserved a fate it might be. For example, the witches' powers have waned as the nearward Dreaming has faded, turning the once-fearsome hags (with the exception of Lenoora and the rest of the Twelve) into almost pitiful creatures, shadows of their former selves. On the other hand, the weight of Banality on their native land appears to cause many of the Thallain enormous and constant pain, which only makes them more enraged and dangerous. Thallain childlings, who, increasingly, are born either deformed or small and sickly, suffer these ravages in particular.

Meanwhile, the secret magical herbs and preparations that grow rife in the Hitherdale swamps have become ominously rare in modern times. Many magical processes that require such ingredients might now be considered lost to Faerie and impossible to complete under present conditions.



## The Chimneypeople

The chimerical race of Chimneypeople mimic humans in most respects, including a variety of ages and two main genders. The primary physical difference separating Chimneypeople from humanity is that the Chimneys possess a much higher internal body temperature, usually around the boiling point of water. It causes a slight seepage of steam to escape continually from a Chimneyperson's ears, nose, and mouth (especially when one speaks), as well as from a specially evolved duct atop a rather elongated head. From this last steaming duct the Chimneypeople derive their name.

Because of the steam problem, Chimneys always wear hats when attempting (futilely) to disguise their identities. They also wear earmuffs (or headphones) in season. Chimneys love to wear warm clothing of extremely garish prints (plaids, paisleys, checks) and dark glasses, but not for any known practical reason — rather, it seems to be simple bad taste. They have no known sense of humor, which tends to make them intensely funny to others.

In the Bullydales, they were smiths and chief toadies, and they figure in a number of stories as goats and straight men. Those few Chimneys to emigrate from the Wastes have gone mercenary and now serve the highest bidder as assassins and arsonists. Many are also self-employed as petty crime bosses. They seem to be obsessed with diamonds and are known to do anything to get them; rumor has it that diamonds form a vital component of the Chimney diet in the Bullydales, and occasional consumption is still necessary to keep their internal furnaces burning at peak efficiency. As mercenaries, they work for anyone, even the fomorians and other avowed enemies of Faerie. They are often highly skilled professionals and can command extraordinarily high prices.

Chimneypeople are solitary, very territorial creatures, and they renegotiate any contract that forces them to cross paths with another of their kind. Whimsical changelings point to the "similarities" between the Chimneypeople and the Men In Black as yet another example of the magicians taking a perfectly good faerie idea and draining all the fun out of it. Needless to say, they don't know what they're talking about.

## The Low Dukedoms: Quox and Mux

*Every truly good practical joke is unrepeatable.*

— Sir Randolph Churchill

Toward the limits of the Bullydales, the petty selfishness and violence becomes more mindless, the schemes increasingly more outrageous. The usual rules bend and finally collapse into absurdity. Once totally absurd behavior is the rule, then the

traveler has arrived in the Low Dukedoms, the heart of trickery and slapstick comedy in the Dreaming.

Everyone in Quox is obsessed with playing practical jokes on people. Everyone in Mux is obsessed with the same thing. The only difference between Mux and Quox is that Muxians hate Quoxites and Quoxites hate Muxians. To an outsider, both are equally obnoxious breeds (or amusing, depending upon one's point of view).

### Legendary Framework

Simply put, the origins of Quox and Mux are one of the most confusing aspects of the Dreaming. There are two main sources of this confusion. First, all important residents are liars, cheats and pranksters, making it difficult to trust historical sources — in fact, the more informed a source is about the Dukedoms, the less likely she is to be telling the truth, and vice versa. Second, the very identities of the dominions that we know as "Quox" and "Mux" appear to have changed randomly throughout the past, and it is difficult to be sure that any two sources are talking about the same "Quox" or the same "Mux."

The Dukedoms (or rather, the earliest known pair of Dukedoms) first appear in the Green Compendium during the age of the fomorians. At that time, the Animal Courts were already a subjugated people, being used by the fomorian overlords as food, slave labor and raw material for cruel entertainments. Those Animals who remained free lived hidden with their wild cousins in the depths of the Dream Forests, where they endured a sad existence.

Fortuitously, at the time of the sidhe gigantomachy against the fomorians, two Animals were born in this forest exile. One, a Hare, was named Quox; the other, a Coyote, was named Mux. As is usual in such stories, the two immediately became lifelong rivals and spent their waking lives spinning elaborate schemes and traps for each other, in hopes of pulling the Ultimate Prank and becoming the unchallenged Great Trickster.

When the two combined forces in an epic practical joke, the magical arsenal of the Red Fomorians was destroyed, which enabled the Arcadians to defeat their foes. Ever since, the Animals have ruled the independent dream-nations of Mux and Quox, given autonomy from Arcadia by the grateful sidhe. Now, the Dukedoms exist as completely independent anarchical states within the Dreaming, ruled only by whichever pranksters possess the epic talent to claim the inheritance of the original Coyote or Hare. Only Zozo the Monkey, original leader of the dispossessed Animals, remains a constant moderating voice in the otherwise insane noise of the Dukedoms.

The chief residents of the Low Dukedoms are childlings of all sorts, pooka, and members of the two Animal Courts. However, any faerie of the requisite temperament is welcome to become a citizen of either realm — apart from the insanely convoluted paperwork required for citizenship (which everyone ignores anyway), the only prerequisite is that the prospective Quoxite/Muxian survive the traditional period of hazing by her new neighbors.



## Local Color

The primary affinities of the Low Dukedoms are animals of all sorts. According to disreputable scholars, it is for this reason that the pooka kith is so closely attuned to the anarchic logic of Quox and Mux; perhaps the fluffleheads even originated from the Dukedoms long ago. While all animals are beloved in the Dukedoms, special honor is given to elephants, monkeys, roosters, foxes, hares and coyotes. Other magical keystones of the Dukedoms include the Seven Naughty Words, the Kazoo and the Bent Spoon. The heraldic insignia for both Mux and Quox is an inflated bladder; the bladder of Quox is displayed normally, but for Mux the bladder is inverted.

The constantly shifting nature of the Dukedoms makes it difficult to provide a definitive list of local points of interest. Still, some aspects of each realm remain "classic," enduring in some form or another from generation to generation. In any case, the traveler should note that, although the favored building material in both Quox and Mux is candy, it is generally considered bad form to snack without permission.

## Zozo's House

An unassuming yellow cottage, Zozo's House is the home of Zozo the Monkey. Zozo is the (comparatively) benign sage and judge over the chaotic doings of the Dukedoms and the almost universally respected arbiter of how far jokes can go and still be funny. When a denizen of the Dukedoms feels that she has been wronged, she has the choice of either taking revenge into her own hands or pleading her case before Zozo. In the first instance, the war of retaliatory pranks likely continues until one party or both lose interest. In the second, Zozo ruminates on the case and then assigns both parties a task; whoever completes his (generally nonsensical or at least whimsical) mission with the grandest style is determined to be legally in the right.

Furthermore, Zozo's House is not only located at the boundary between Quox and Mux, it is that boundary line itself. Pranking parties who sortie into the opposing Dukedom to cause trouble are officially "safe" once they cross through Zozo's fenced yard and back to their home territory. All pursuit must stop at the house, and the pursuers must either plead their case before Zozo or go home unsatisfied to plot revenge in their own fashion. It should be noted that "tagging the yard" is not the same thing as being legally absolved of whatever pranks a faerie has committed; nothing is forgiven or forgotten, and the trickster should never forget that the tricked will remember the event, should they ever meet again.

Furthermore, tagging the yard is by no means as easy as it might sound. Zozo is a terrible housekeeper, and his yard is cluttered with broken toys, half-eaten food, banana peels and other garbage. On occasion, fleeing pranksters have suffered greater abuse from these obstacles than they would have gotten from their pursuers; some inhabitants of the Dukedoms are so daunted by the yard that they tag it only as a last resort. Furthermore, the fleeing party must cross the entire yard in order to score a tag — anywhere within the yard, she is still subject to being caught and punished by her pursuers.

## Quoxburg and Muxtown: Twin Cities of the Absurd

Quoxburg, the only important inhabited area in Quox, is the size of a small town. Because animals, childlings and childling-size chimera compose the majority of the local population, many of the more important buildings are scaled down, making the Quoxburg skyline both picturesque and vaguely disturbing. Visitors of larger size who do not possess shapeshifting magic tend to find it difficult to navigate the small stairwells and doorways, which creates impromptu "Small Only" areas.

Important places within Quoxburg proper include the palace of Chaunticleer Quox (a Rooster) and the adjoining Egg Factory, which forms the rudimentary basis of what passes for the Quoxian economy. These eggs are packaged and shipped to points throughout the Dreaming, where they are used for a variety of purposes, from food to sorcery (including special armors and Orfeo's Path) to simply being thrown at people. Other points of interest are the Tricked-Out Bazaar, which specializes in gaffed and other joke clothing, various training and recruitment facilities for the Nursery Battalions, and several exotic novelty shops.

Muxtown, the Muxly counterpart to neighboring

## The Putti

These chimerical entities (also called the "Chubbies") resemble plump human babies of less than two years of age and were employed in Arcadia as houseservants and valets. They are good workers (albeit with a wide streak of mischief) but do not thrive in truly dangerous environments. Within the Dreaming, some colonies have gone feral, reverting to mundane baby culture (or lack thereof). Others are traded among cannibal chimera as a delicacy, and still others have gone rogue, quitting their jobs and living throughout the Dream Realms as free agents.

Although they can walk and manipulate objects with enough steadiness to carry heavy tea-trays and march in processions, Putti possess no physical skills not commonly available to two-year-old human babies. Some breeds possess small wings for gliding short distances, but such Putti have become quite rare. No Putti are particularly good at fighting, although feral types have been known to bite. Their lifecycle is quite bizarre, as they are apparently grown and harvested like fruit on trees. Childlings are infamous for being both fascinated and disgusted by the Putti, and they vacillate between feeling jealous enough of the Putti to try to get them into trouble and romping happily with them as equals. Left to their own devices, Putti prefer to go naked. When on-duty, they can usually be found wearing livery chosen by their master; decadent or escaped specimens wear a burlesque of human fashions.

Highly placed Putti have been known to put on airs and behave as if they were human beings or even true changelings. There have been incidents of Putti valets getting involved in human vices like cigar smoking or gambling, and a number of famous Putti have participated in palace intrigues.



Quoxburg, resembles its rival in many respects, including the childling-scaled architecture. In fact, Muxtown boasts an entire ghetto neighborhood that is scaled even smaller, as it accommodates toddlers and the smallest of animals only. Called "Puttitown," this notorious region is the nexus for many of the most ruthless Putti crime syndicates in the Dreaming; it has an ominous density of milk bars and clip shops.

The increased presence of the Putti and openly carnivorous animals makes the flavor of Muxtown rather rambunctious and wild compared to Quoxburg, which is saying a great deal. Unseelie brawls break out in the Muxtown streets far more frequently than in Quoxburg, and they tend to spread farther and to be more violent.

Other than Puttitown (with its pawnshops and so forth), Muxtown boasts the Mansion of Reynardine Mux (a Fox), a gunpowder factory, and Joe Miller's Archive of joke books.

## The Joke Isn't Funny Anymore

Although the manic energy and nonstop laughs of the Dukedoms hide it, Winter is actually quite deeply established in this realm. The signs are subtle but undeniable — since the sealing of Arcadia, the Bruins (chimerical bears) have all disappeared and are thought to have died out. Certain particularly choice novelty items like good itching powder or Special Gum are now difficult to find, as the raw materials have become extinct within those parts of the Dreaming where they were once harvested. A general malaise has set in, compounded by an influx of comparatively serious-minded military childlings and mercantile Putti who would prefer to make revolution or money than to laugh. Every time somebody tells a joke and nobody laughs, a Quoxite dies. Every time somebody gets told to stop goofing around, a Muxian dies.

Saddest of all, Zozo the Monkey has finally grown sick with his advanced age, and no longer seems interested in fostering the amusing rivalry between the Dukedoms. It is uncertain whether the internecine pranking would continue when he dies, or what (if anything) would replace it.

## The Deepward Road

Before Arcadia, before the sidhe rose out of the Hearthlands and took their rightful place as rulers of the Dream, the fomorians ruled. The trolls remember the Fomorian Dream, but they do not speak of it — according to the Green and Black Compendia, it was an age of strange wonders, haunting beauty and terror, and the oldest of all the stories, ones that no longer make sense even to faeries.

Neither Seelie nor Unseelie, but comprising three ancient courts of their own, the fomorians are best remembered now as preternatural monsters, against which the sidhe rebelled in the conflict known as the War of the Trees or the Fomoriomachy. After a seemingly eternal and undoubtedly apocalyptic series of battles, the three courts of the fomorians were chained and imprisoned in the depths of the Dream Forest, on the peaks of the Dream Mountains and at the bottom of the Dream Sea.

Most of the fomorians are still chained. Since Arcadia has locked itself away from the Dreaming, however, some have

gotten loose and are even now calling their forces to these wild territories in the depths of the Far Dreaming. Between the locked gates and the Earth, nestled among dreams and forgotten memories, the Great Monsters are taking root.

## Deep if by Land: The Milderwood

The Dreaming is not bound by one truth, but is instead built on the back of contradiction and paradox. Everything can be true and false within the depths of the Dream, depending on who you talk to and where you are. Solid, static truth deadens the Dream; its body is cold iron.

It is because of this aspect of the Dreaming that the Milderwood (also known as the Forest of Dán and the Great Dream Forest) is the stuff of paradox given form. As "the Forest of Lies," the Milderwood is a spawning ground for all that is illusory, falsely seductive, ephemeral and maliciously untrue — in short, of everything that lies in the painful gap between the true nature of things and the masks they wear. Whenever a child tells the truth, the faerie sages say, some pernicious part of the Milderwood dies. The tangled roots of the old oaks grow straight and sickly, the brambles thin out, and even the infamous looping paths of the Milderwood become safe, clear and monotonously boring.

And yet, the Milderwood is also "the first of the great True Forests of the Dreaming." It is the heart of all dreams of trees and shadows, cool paths and secret waterways. Impenetrable and confusing as the Milder is, the Great Forest is still one of the last refuges for all those little spirits and splinters of fairy folklore that were locked out of Arcadia. In the shadow of the leaves and trees, these fragments of the old stories pool and grow together, forming strange hybrid myths and creatures. Meantime, within the Wood, the Silver Path is almost invis-

## The Dance of the Trees

The oldest and proudest of the faerie spirits of the Wood, the Dancing Trees, appear to be unafraid of the changes in the Earth that terrify meat changelings. To the Trees, even Winter and Spring are but seasons in the dance. Branches bend in the snow in order that they do not break. Leaves fall, but there will be new ones. Boughs adapt with changing conditions, turning toward the sun and away from obstructions, growing over and around.

Whether this is vegetable wisdom or senility is a matter of opinion. In any case, the Dancing Trees are apparently instrumental in spreading the cult of the New Spring (if not starting it outright) throughout changeling society, which is one of the chief reasons the dryads (little daughters of the Dance) are so mistrusted by conservative sidhe. According to rumor, the Dancers are also teaching the human plant-witches something about the future, something depthless and timeless.





ible, a slender goat-trail of riddles and complicated woodcraft.

## The White Fomorian Court

In the morning of the world, when human civilization was still a circle of torchlight surrounded by a vast and unexplored wilderness, the Milderwood was that wilderness. In those days, it was the stronghold of the White Fomorians, youngest and smallest of the three fomorian courts. There, in the depths of the Dream Forest, the White Monsters built their great and ghostly city, carving it out of ivory, aspen and alabaster. This city was so terrible as to have no name.

The White Fomorians themselves were proud and grotesquely beautiful creatures who ruled an empire of delirium and phantasmagoria. Born, perhaps, in fever- or in drug-induced nightmares, they were exquisitely cruel to the various races they enslaved (many of which would later be exterminated or become associated with the Thallain). Throughout the primeval Dreaming, all chimera who were smaller or less cunning than the White feared being captured and remade by the fomorians.

It is said that the War of the Trees between the sidhe and the fomorians began when the White enslaved members of the first tribe of sidhe. With the sealing of Arcadia, nothing can be certain, but the dim memories of certain earthbound sidhe and the fragmentary accounts in the Black Compendium seem to verify this. The masters of the nameless white city committed crimes that were terrible to the Arcadians, and in three epic battles the White Fomorians and their shimmering city were destroyed.

The White Fomorians claimed that the sidhe fought unfairly, both by employing strange new weapons and allies and through attacking by surprise. In any case, the ivory gates of the nameless city were broken and the roots and runners of the eternal forest reclaimed the streets and towers. Within the green shadows, the Arcadian magicians bound the surviving White, entangling them forever (or so it was hoped) in the roots of the oldest oaks.

Nothing lasts forever where magic is concerned.

## The Empire of Masks

Having defeated and imprisoned the White Court, the Arcadians then turned to defend themselves against reprisals from the other fomorians. In order to prevent meddling with the entangled foe, the Milderwood was allowed to grow densely over the ruined city, while the Silver Path itself became the obscure trace it is today. Silence fell upon the forest.

Unfortunately, rather than keeping nightmarish elements away from the imprisoned fomorians, this isolation only encouraged grotesque and malicious chimera to take refuge in the Milderwood, far from the punishing eyes of the sidhe and other comparatively upright folk. While the White slept on in the darkness of their oaks, the forest above them became a haven for Great Witches, solitary monsters, savage beasts and hybrids, and other bizarre creatures. The wood itself grew strange and unsettling, as the alien magic of the nameless white city



## Liliu, the Lady with Bones Instead of a Hand

One of the White Fomorians, the Lady Liliu, loves nothing more than the hunt for children. Dressed in exquisite haute couture gowns (she never wears any colors but white and iridescent, reptilian green), elbow gloves, wide-brimmed hats and uncomfortable shoes, she roams both the Dreaming and the waking world looking for children to capture. In the waking world, she never remains in one town for longer than a lunar month.

The Lady has no flesh on her right hand, only living bone, which she hides with a glove to keep her identity secret. When she thinks she's alone, she absently scratches her boney fingertips against metal, wood, or chalkboards to produce truly disgusting noises. The bone hand is much stronger than that of a human woman of her build.

In the waking world, the Lady's favored method is to move into an abandoned house in a small town, then do away with a teacher at the local elementary school and take his or her place. She then examines her students over the next week or so. If she discovers any childlings among them, she stalks them and attempts to lure them into her house. At this point, a struggle begins that will not end until either the childling is captured or the lady is driven away from the town; it is doubtful whether she can be killed by normal means. If there are no childlings in the Lady's chosen class, she has no qualms about kidnapping another teacher and trying again until her month is up.

No one knows what happens to children captured by the Lady with Bones Instead of a Hand. Perhaps they become part of her entourage of strangely wizened dwarf houseservants. Perhaps they are eaten or otherwise utilized. In any case, according to some accounts, the Lady cannot be seen by wilders or grumps, but such claims may be mere exaggeration.

leached into the roots of the trees and fed fever-dream into the very earth and air. The source of the falsehood and illusion of the "Forest of Lies" is this poison.

The Milderwood festered. Long after the end of the War of the Trees, Dame Marianna the False came out of Arcadia to dwell in the forest. Naturally, accounts vary as to how and why a high Arcadian lady would do such a thing. Perhaps, as her enemies claim, she sought to learn the forbidden fomorian arts above their sleeping bodies. Perhaps, as she herself claims, she was gifted with foreknowledge of Arcadia's doom and fled early to create a sanctuary elsewhere for the faerie folk.

Barring love and other enchantments, it is doubtful whether the truth will ever be had of this Mistress of the Forest of Lies. Marianna has built herself her own mad court in the depths of

the Milderwood, half astride the Silver Path and half off it. In this "Empire of Masks," she rules over a chimerical throng and some scattered, deeply Bedlam-ridden changelings, who, like Duke Asterlan, became lost in the Far Dreaming and found their way to the Milderwood. Wearing masks that are, by turns, inhumanly beautiful and monstrously ugly, Marianna's court plays at games of vanity and subterfuge. They are averse to showing their true faces to one another — the idea horrifies them, and being stripped of one's mask is considered the ultimate disgrace and punishment.

Behind the game of masks is a strange and abiding sorrow. Some say Dame Marianna is helping to free the White Fomorians from their imprisonment. Others insist that the Masked Court's members are becoming increasingly like the old fomorians, and that, whether or not they become vessels for the actual White, they are walking down the same road. Still others (a minority), argue that Marianna is actually attempting to keep the fomorians securely rooted underground, and is hence protecting Arcadia itself.

In any case, the Milderwood appears to be changing again.

## The Bones of the City

Growing numbers of the White Court have slipped their bonds and now walk the Dreaming as they did in the ancient days. While most of them have escaped to the far depths of the Dreaming or to the Earth (where they appear to be unaffected by Banality), some have remained in the Milderwood, apparently to return the Great Dream Forest to its original state. Already, the old traps and delirium-snares of the fomorians are spreading throughout the Dreaming, while the Forest of Lies itself becomes, bit by bit, transformed to reflect better the Dream the fomorians remember. As this process continues, the guards and wards placed on those fomorians still imprisoned weaken even further, increasing the risk that they will break down entirely. Without the aid (or notice) of Arcadia, such an occurrence would likely cause the return of the oldest of Old Winters to the Dreaming, dooming the Earthbound to a nightmarish world.

Aspects of the Fomorian Dream are already appearing throughout the Milderwood, although they are almost always

## The Knights of the Rose

The Rosenkavaliers are a paramilitary arm of the Inanimate Court of Seed, staffed entirely by spirits inhabiting rosebushes. These entities tend most closely to resemble sidhe, except they are more abstract and even more subtle than the meat highborns. As the only group within the Sylvan Empire to concern themselves with courtly love or the virtues of the quest, the Rosenkavaliers share many matters of temperament with the Arcadians, but now spend much of their time hunting signs of the resurgent fomorians throughout the Dream Forests.



destroyed as soon as possible by the Knights of the Rose (and, to their credit, the Masked Court). Trees should not have bones, and yet they do increasingly in the Milderwood. Strange, noisy vehicles should not roar through the forest and breathe poisonous clouds into the air, and yet they do. Cities should not rebuild themselves, growing walls and stairs again, an alabaster panel at a time. Within the nested paradoxes of the Forest of Lies, it is difficult to tell what is impossible and what is part of the natural order of dreams, and so the Fomorian Dream grows.

## Deep If by Air: Chakravada and the Splintered Mountains

*The heights whirl themselves away  
still more fiercely  
than you.*

—Paul Celan, “Wer Schlag Sich Zu Dir?”

The range of peaks known to changelings as the Splintered Mountains rings the Far Dreaming in all directions, forming the natural and largely impassable boundary between the Hearthlands and the Deep Dreaming itself. In general, the Splintered Mountains offer a fantastic landscape almost beyond the imagination: massive, jagged peaks of naked stone jutting skyward in utter defiance of gravity, coming impossibly close to bridging the gap between earth and heaven. From afar, the Splinterpeaks (and particularly the giant in their midst, Mount Chakravada) appear daunting, a literal empire of peaks and valleys. Closer, the daunting panorama dissolves into an endless network of passes and slopes — an entire world to become lost in, where altitude and seasons are transient phenomena at best.

Here is another of the mysteries of the Dreaming: Mount Chakravada, greatest of all mountains, is also the center of all the worlds, and, at least within dreams, it is alive. Some of the most secretive of all the mortal magicians know this fact, but have misled themselves to think that the Mountain no longer exists. They called Chakravada “Qaf,” and, although it was long ago that they knew it and the world has changed since, the sacred mountain lingers still. Somewhere within the Dreaming, the world is still as whole as it ever was, splintered but unbroken — this is the difference between dream and waking life.

In the Dreaming, the great slow spirit of the mountain lingers, brooding in its ponderous majesty. According to the legends, all the laws and bans of the Dreaming depend on Chakravada’s stony body for force, from Zozo’s Pronuncifees to the Riddles of Doom and Silver. Oaths sworn on the Mountain are unbreakable, no matter how terrible or doom-laden they might be; the most famous (and tragic) example is the Pact with Hell, which allowed Arcadia to be built, and because of which the Tithe is now paid.

Beyond the undeniable wonder of Mount Chakravada, the Splinterpeaks are an endless land of stark, elemental contrasts, all bright sun and icy glacier, high cliff and windswept void. Here lies the Red Court of the Fomorians, part of the mythic origin of the mountain range. In the Nine Last Battles, when

the fomorians were finally defeated, the force of the blow that struck them down was such that the firmament of the Dream splintered and warped — thus were the Splinterpeaks made, through the rupture and upthrust of the Dreaming. Because the Arcadians did not possess the ability to kill the fomorians, they instead chained the Red Court to the starkest peaks of the new mountains. The fomorians are there still, and the sound of their fury is as thunder.

## Old Magic from Before Time

As the firmament and circular spine of the Dreaming, the Splintered Stone Realm is a refuge for all chimerical creatures and mythic entities so fantastic that they must flee far from the banal Earth. In the valleys and lowland slopes, the trolls have built their cities and walled fortresses; on the high crags, the Great Dragons and gryphons nest. Elsewhere still, in the abandoned places, the giants and hermits cleave to their isolated holdings, while on Chakravada itself, the metallic spirits of the Alchemical Court dance their eternal dance of alloyance and transmutation.

The Splinterpeaks are, however, as much about air as stone. Birds are everywhere, with representatives of all surviving mythic species gathering on Chakravada for the Feathered Parliament of the King of Birds. Above even the dragons, the myriad creatures of the Wind Court have their complicated arguments and play their invisible games, and there are even stranger chimera to be met in the atmospheric reaches, between the highest peaks and the lower stars.

## The Alchemical Court

Elusive noble families of the nature spirits, each of these entities takes its body from alchemically pure substances: gold, silver, other metals and basic matter. The exquisitely arcane politics between these families apparently mirrors the essential chemical processes that slowly transform the Splinterpeaks, repairing the cataclysmic damage caused in the Last Battles. Even if the Earth has suffered wounds past repair, the Dreaming contains within itself its own processes for healing the catastrophic damage of long ago.

At one time, one of these families took its husks from cold iron, but, needless to say, they are no longer overtly extant. The

## The Stone Men (Glomes)

Rocky beings akin to the oldest of the giants, the Stone Men pursue existences of solitude and intensely slow interaction with others of their kind. Their long life spans (Glome husks endure for millennia; a handful of Glomes claim to remember the birth of the oceans) make extended communication or friendship with more ephemeral beings difficult, and some Glome conversations take centuries to get past the pleasant-ries. What does a century or two of silence really matter to a being who can remember dinosaurs?



## Parosemes

Parosemes are extremely rarefied creatures, tricksters who take especial delight in the spoken word. Of all chimera, they are the best liars known, rivaling the eshu for sheer ability to tell stories that may or may not be true. Many Parosemes manifest in human form in order to confuse, play tricks, and spin riddle-webs among the “heavy people” of changeling society, and they are particularly dangerous when they pretend to be “wise old” philosophers.

With the most delicate tastes and metabolisms of any known chimerical race, the Parosemes can always be identified by their extreme horror of “heaviness” (by which they mean anything that requires concentration, solid purpose or passionate feeling) and Banality.

loss has made the remaining families sleepy and the alloyances between individual Alchymites impermanent and somehow desperate. It has become difficult for the metals to concentrate, and most now can manage little more than faltering conversation.

## The Wind Court (The Silfar)

After the Shattering, all too many of the Stormdancers who remained on Earth soon went mad. The majority of these beings have since found their way back to the Dreaming, but the results have still been disastrous for the Wind Court. Always given to a certain vagary, with attention spans that could be described as limited at best, the silfar have since allowed their society to dissolve. Meanwhile, as the Earth’s atmosphere continues to collapse into an anarchy of delinquent smokes, malicious clouds of ash and untrustworthy hazes, the situation only grows worse. Denied the sight of starlight by the magical Wall Across the Sky, the minds of the air become increasingly poisoned and malicious.

Now, only a few silfar remember the old grandeur and purity of thought for which they were once famous among their faerie cousins, and the old courtliness and celestial etiquette have almost been forgotten. Of the ones who remember the stars, the most important are probably the Knights of the Shape of Air, the last of the chivalric orders of the atmosphere. Reduced in numbers to a motley assortment of winds, clouds and perfumes, the Order of the Shape roams the Dreaming as solitary individuals or in small bands, seeking justice and the reform of the upper atmosphere.

While they have grown shabby since the Shattering, these silfar knights are still unearthly graceful, deathly quick and fragile in their beauty, and they resemble delicate watercolor paintings — when they deign to put on visible bodies at all, that is. The armorial insignia of the Order is invisible to heavier eyes, being a representation of the “shape of air” itself.

## Red Winter Approaching

Bound into the still-steaming rock of the then newly splintered Mountains, the Red Court of the Fomorian have never yet managed to escape. Instead, they bide their time, summoning Great Dragons and other creatures of the Elder Dream to their places of imprisonment to share counsel and secret wisdom. Perhaps they still plot against the Arcadians who jailed them in the rock. Perhaps they have already had their revenge, and now need only sit and scream their laughter from their stark prisons.

As yet, time and Banality have had only the most superficial effects within the Splinterpeaks. This deep in the Dreaming, Winter is only a vague rumor — almost a ghost story — but still, the most sensitive of the great, magical creatures of the peaks can feel the first signs of Winter coming. For these rarest and most fragile of chimera, even the slopes of Mount Chakravada have begun to feel unpleasant and dull.

This development alarms the sidhe sorcerers, who worry that if the force of Glamour is decaying even in the Splinterpeaks, the bonds keeping the Red Fomorian imprisoned will weaken accordingly. When and if that occurs and the Red Court walks the Dreaming again, the faerie dream may well be doomed. Already, the old dragons and other behemoths are gathering and watching, waiting for their old allies to break free and lead the way into a new Red Dream of Fire.

## Echoes of Lost Arcadia

Deep in the Dreaming, poised between the Far Dreaming and the Deepest Countries beyond, there are dominions that tell stories shaped in the likeness of human hearts. Stronger and more intimate than the more universal realms of the Dreaming, these “Heart’s Realms” have gathered many of the fugitive pieces of the Arcadian Dream to themselves and are now often confused with Arcadia itself by hopeful travelers. Bitterly, this is too cheerful a conclusion to be true.

While each “Echo Arcadia” reflects some or all of the outer forms of Arcadia to some extent, the facsimile is never perfect. There is always some sort of transposition or absence, like the variation between a real person and a photograph. Something is always lost — no matter how much some Kithain would like for these realms to be the perfect mirror image of Arcadia, the Echoes are, at best, melancholy reminders of the perfect world that has been locked away.

The inhabitants of these realms should not be blamed for this confusion. Both chimerical and truly fae denizens of the Echoes are often just as convinced as newcomers that they have found Arcadia. Comparatively few of them use the universal sorrow for the vanished realm as a snare to extort Glamour or services from travelers; instead, the locals are almost always more eager to believe in the Echo than the tourists.

A truly seasoned trodwalker can tell that the Heart’s Realms are not Arcadia, because each is vastly different from every other. While each echoes Arcadia to the same extent as all the others, each does so in a different register and a different key. The trick, according to the old lore, is to find the one that incorporates all the





joys and terrors of each of the Heart's Realms into itself, containing elements drawn from all possible stories: That is the true Arcadia, the Story built of all possible stories.

Moreover, the Heart's Realms were meant to interact with one another as dreamers do, sharing strength and perspective. Now, with the sealing of Arcadia, each is trapped in unhealthy isolation from the others, and the realms themselves are withering away, according to their own unique nature: Ariké, for example, has retreated into a drowned existence of mirrors and sleep, while the ancient fighting-plaints of Kureksarra drown their loneliness in empty civil war and bloodshed. Each is cursed in its own way; each calls out for heroes who can perform the deeds necessary to restore the Story and repair the realms.

## KUREKSARRA: The Red Plains

Dominion of war without end, Kureksarra is the homeland of dreams of struggle, competition, victory and revenge. A vast plain dotted with the ruins of fortified installations, Kureksarra was once a green realm of gentle landscapes and placid manor houses. Now, all that endures is a land so littered with bones and broken weapons that the ground refuses to give birth to anything living. Only the withered old oak trees remain, dripping blood like red sap when it rains. The trods leading in and out of Kureksarra are paths of blades and rivers of razors; the

once-elegant Twin Capitals of the realm are broken ruins filled with bones and the smell of blood in the dust.

Above all realms, the Red Plains bear witness to the futility and addictive quality of violence — the civil war fought by the chimera and mad changelings of the realm will not stop until all are dead, and even the prize for which they fight is only the ability to cause greater destruction. They say the land needs a liege before it can be healed, but the truth of the Dreaming is that the land suffers far more at the hands of the competing candidates for the throne than it does from the mere emptiness of the throne itself. Better no ruler at all than the wars of Kureksarra.

The Red King of the Fomorians, humiliated and then defeated here in the Nine Battles that ended the War of the Trees, laid this curse upon Kureksarra. Having had his arsenal stolen from him by the trickster beasts Mux and Quox, the Red King had but one weapon left, a present from his fomorian grandmother, the Green Witch. It was the Triumph Casque of Sorrows, a weapon against which there was said to be no defense, and which could not be stolen from him because it occupied the cavity in his body ordinarily occupied by a heart.

The Red King's hatred for the Arcadians was such that, rather than open the Casque and slay them all quickly, he broke its key into nine pieces, one for each battle he had fought. Then, he ripped the casque from his chest and died, scattering the pieces of the key into the camp of his enemies.



When the Arcadian army departed to plan the campaign against the Green Court, some chimera and fae remained behind to recover the pieces of the key to the Casque. Their intent was to reassemble the key, and then destroy the Casque or seal it away in the Arcadian armory, but they soon found that no one could trust the others enough to rejoin the pieces of the key as they were found. How would possession of such a weapon corrupt its custodian? Would whoever ended up holding the key be able to withstand the temptation to sample the Casque's power, either using the weapon itself for selfish (or unselfish) purposes, or else simply using the threat of opening the Casque to manipulate everyone around them?

Almost before the chains had been forged that would bind the Green Fomorian, the army at Kureksarra had disintegrated into chaos. Informal alliances formed between holders of key fragments and other interested parties, always dissolving again as jealousy, ambition and paranoia drove the allies apart. In time, many of the great warriors of the Dreaming heard of the unending conflict and found their way to the Red Fields, in hope of proving themselves against the gathering combatants.

For long periods of time, the nature of the Casque, the broken key and the conflict itself appear to be forgotten by everyone concerned, and then the war lulls slightly to become a somewhat destructive tournament of sorts. Other, spurious explanations arise to justify the carnage: The winner of the "tournament" will be crowned King of Kureksarra or Queen of the Gwydion sidhe, or will heal the land and reveal it to be an ensorcelled version of Arcadia. However, at the end, the poisonous truth of the fomorian curse always reasserts itself and the state of the Kureksarran dream returns to its normal level of chaotic violence.

After so much killing, betrayal and sheer waste of energy, it is questionable whether there can ever be a winner in this war — or even whether it can ever end.

## The Five Great Beasts and Others

At present, five major alliances of warriors are active in the Red Fields; collectively, the leaders of these alliances are known as the Five Great Beasts of the Dreaming, and all are distinguished for tactical skill, ruthlessness and cunning. They fight one another in an eternally shifting pattern of truces, feints and vendettas, and sally forth from their nearly ruined fortifications to take one another's key fragments or defend against attacks from rivals or would-be claimants. The names of the Five are legend throughout the Dreaming, or were before they were caught up in the madness of the Red Fields: Tamur the Unexpected, Sir Bolsan of the Dove, Harroth the Mute, Lady Allesande the Fair and Kosa the Bull.

Meanwhile, the constant bloodshed has lured other beasts of war and scavenging nightmares to Kureksarra from all over the Dreaming. Dream-lions, manticores, muggerlies and saps all prowl the killing fields to feast on the wounded and the dead. Dream clowns, moribirds and vakyrien squabble over especially valiant fallen warriors, while a flight of minor dragons circles the entire battleground, bringing the threat of death

from the skies.

Taking advantage of the kinstrike, a few of the White Fomorians who had managed to free themselves from their bondage descended upon the old killing field of Kureksarra, accompanied by a small army of minor nightmares and Thallain and armed with a large arsenal of the old fomorian weapons. Rather than attacking their enemies directly, however, as in the old age of the world, they are simply camped and watch the ongoing struggle without joining it.

According to rumor, certain factions of the kinstrike have even approached the fomorian force about establishing a temporary alliance against the other claimants. Whatever concessions the Great Beasts might offer the fomorians in return for such an alliance would quite probably doom the sidhe Dream, or at the very least be tragic in scope (a concept that the White probably find amusing in their way). On the other hand, the terrible weapons of the fomorians (poisonous gases, deformation machines and other devices designed primarily to mutilate quickly and kill as an afterthought) would certainly tip the scale and end the wars of Kureksarra once and for all. Even if none of the Beasts were tempted by the notion, they would certainly wish to stop their rivals from allying with the fomorians, or even to ally with the enemy before any of the other claimants could do so first.

## Rubezhal: The Cup of Vine

Hidden just under the surface of the Dreaming, in tunnels and caverns and enchanted hollows beneath the hills, the dominion of Rubezhal is nearly a world in itself. The faeries built many of their most ornate realms here among the roots of the Dream and the mountains, realms woven with gems and precious metals and lit by cleverly wrought interior suns and moons.

Everything in Rubezhal that wants to be beautiful is beautiful in its way, from the ruby gardens of the royal Kuberas to the fragile jet towers of the charnel city of Doonesh-Katarrh. Whatever does not want to be beautiful is likewise free to run the limits of the grotesque.

If the riches of Rubezhal cannot be counted, neither can the pleasures of the undercountry. Under the green light of the interior moons, the Kuberas perform revels which the Earthbound can

### The Triumph Casque of Sorrow

Encased in lead since the earliest times, this legendary treasure has never been used in the memory of any living creature, chimera or fae. According to the White Fomorians, the Triumph Casque is a "weapon against which defense is impossible," enabling whoever possesses it to eradicate anyone and anything without fear of reprisal or failure. It is believed that the Casque operates through principles common to both fire and poison, eradicating whatever it is opened to destroy in a singularly painful fashion.





barely remember or dream of, banquets of impossible complexity amid surroundings of obscene luxury. As with all things faerie, this luxury is the joy and the doom of Rubezhal, for even pleasure is not a comfort in itself. Numbed by the timeless round of couplings and other masquerades, the Rubezhali grow sleepy and drawn. Above, hung in the bare rock, the moons shine on, disquieting in the unchangingness of their phases.

## Legendary Framework

In the earliest days, before the fomorians and Arcadia, the Undercountry lay rich with treasure. The oldest children of the Dreaming lived here, and it was their magic alone that hollowed out the great caverns where they built their inner cities, secret under their cloak of stone.

After the Mwa instigated the Arcadian uprising against the Fomorian Courts, they opened the vaults of Rubezhal to the faeries to provide them with weapons of great subtlety. Among these items, the most famous ones include the Cup of Vine, which caused roots and vines to entangle the fomorian armies, first wrapping around their feet, then their legs, and finally their necks, strangling them. Others, such as the Locket of Fiona and the Combs of Shahrani, bewitched the fomorians, snaring them in their own foul lusts or turning them into stone. Some traces of those bewitched armies remain even today in the less-traveled caverns, imprisoned in those unwholesome places like Doonesh-Katarrh and Oogesh, where sensible people do not go.

After the fomorians were banished and Arcadia was founded, the hidden palaces of the Undercountry returned to their old round of revels. Eventually, only a few of the old Fiona remained in the gem gardens and copper-roofed spires, with most of the remainder of the realm falling under the rule of the Kuberas. The Kuberas were one of those peoples of the Dreaming who had allied with the sidhe during the Fomorian Wars. However, like many of the allies, they had never concerned themselves too intently with Arcadia, and instead preferred to dwell in their own earthly and Dream dominions of ease and increase.

So it was that the Undercountry lapsed into a dormant, wintry state during the Golden Age of Arcadia and lost itself in its own idle games of pleasure. The towers and feasting-halls still blazed with their deep green balefires, shining like smoldering emeralds upon the remaining connoisseurs.

## Capecia: The Clockwork Sky

The Glamour of Capecia is about the victory of artifice over nature. Here, in the City of Clocks, enslaved changelings and their human allies have created a realm ruled by tin toys and automata, puppets and paper dolls. The skills of the craftsmen have conquered time by building not in flesh, but in more durable materials: bronze and plastic, wire and leather, heartwood and rubber. Everything in this bustling city is not only artificial but automated; it is a world where meat changelings drift like bewildered ghosts. The mannequins fill the moving sidewalks, and hurry along on their stiff-jointed legs, as they dance their dance that never ends. Above, the puppet people stare with their glass eyes through office windows, while



others chatter on about whatever comes into their newspaper-stuffed heads. The tin dog chases the tin cat, which chases the tin mouse, endlessly.

Capecia is the Glamour Machine and the Machinery of Glamour, the great neon Factory whence the living dolls come as they struggle to become (or simply replace) flesh. From its earliest origins as the holding of a family of orphan toys, Capecia has grown into a thriving — if unnerving — metropolis, the center of the Inanimate Empire.

Naturally (unnaturally), there are some who claim that the Inanimae have gone mad. The living dolls are clearly engaged in some sort of war with one another, fighting mercilessly over obscure doctrines that they reassure flesh-and-blood observers from other realms, “You meat would not understand.”

## The Clockwork City Untethered by Gravity Even

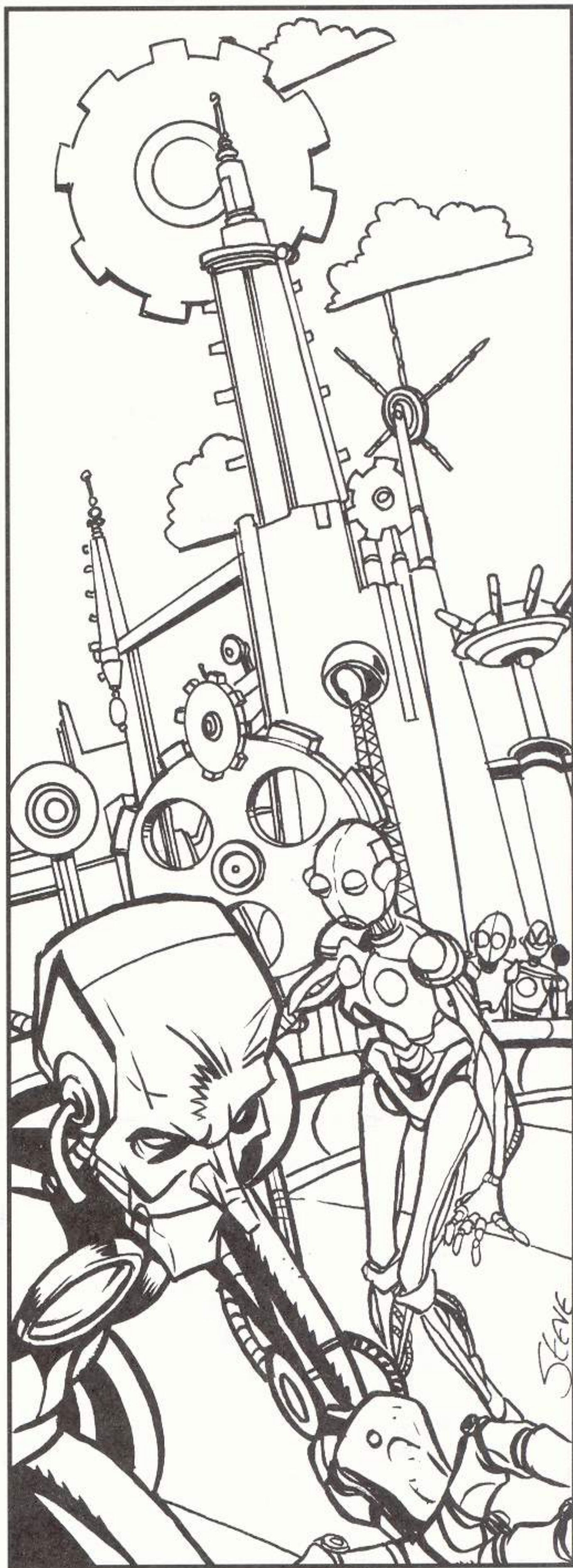
Whatever natural terrain was once dominant in Capecia has long since been vacuumed, painted over, paved, and otherwise effaced by the burgeoning automaton population. In its place, the realm is now filled with metal, concrete, the foursquare, and the geometric figure of the squared circle.

The realm itself is dreamed in the shape of a gigantic city that floats unsupported in the upper sky, like a ship in an invisible sea. Various “suburbs” are connected to the city by means of rigid corridors and walkways, some of which are motorized to simulate the movement of the stars in the sky. Of course, in Capecia itself, the true sky is not visible; instead, a canopy of pale blue paper has been stapled over the city to keep out the rain and weather.

Within Capecia, districts filled with narrow, twisting alleyways alternate with wide boulevards and straight-angled arcologies. In the current internecine struggle, various of these districts have been claimed by different factions and bear evocative names like “The Rotwang Corridor,” “Hoffmannstraße” and “ix-subfigura B.” Although the Inanimae take care to mark several of these “active districts” with flags and colorful ideographic banners, the marking system is still confusing to most flesh creatures and subject to last-minute change. Caution is advised if the traveler wishes to avoid becoming a statistic of terrorist attack.

## Factions in the Making War

In theory, the most important denizens of Capecia are the Dreamers who have been captured by the inanimic raiding parties to ensure a fresh supply of new chimerical bodies (“husks”) for automated “children.” These hapless prisoners are actually treated comparatively well by most of the inanimic factions, although the strict routine is harmful to most captured changelings — uniforms and long hours with few rest periods and little reward quickly causes them death by Banality. With the exception of hard-line anti-meat groups, most of the inanimate supervisors indulge their hostages’ biological “weaknesses” (the need for food and elimination, emotional exhaustion) with a fond but uncomprehending





precision. In practice, naturally, the flesh inhabitants of Capecia are peripheral citizens at best. Even those "lucky" enough to have gained special status through creativity or efficiency are alienated from daily Capecian affairs, forced to live and socialize in special districts and kept on an early curfew "for their own protection."

The true masters of the Clockwork Sky are the various warring strains of inanimate life that the crafters have made. These include the mannequins, the puppet people, the rotwangs, the copelli, the alberti and other esoteric breeds of chimerical doll.

## The Colored Mannequins

Rare among chimera, these constructs have prospered and multiplied on Earth since the Sundering and today make up a thriving civilization of their own, separate from and unintelligibly alien to changeling society. The mannequins are unparalleled masters of disguise and can easily mask themselves to look like any humanoid race, age or gender, but their true form is that of a jointed dummy made from some rigid material that resembles hard plastic. This plastic comes in at least eleven known colors, hence the common name for these beings.

The mannequins do not have faces. In their natural state, their heads are smooth, featureless ovals, which the mannequins often adorn with geometrical figures for unknown reasons, perhaps out of vanity or as caste markings. They do not breathe and do not have voices; when forced to communicate vocally in disguise, they use clever tape recordings bartered from other chimerical races to simulate a human voice.

The mannequins have come to enjoy a monopoly over most of the major department stores throughout the world, which they rule like fortress city-states. Members of other chimerical races who choose to live in a department store are allowed to coexist peacefully, but the mannequins demand at least token tribute from all within their realm and also demand to be kept informed about any goings-on within the store.

Within their domains, the mannequins apparently perform rigidly choreographed ritual magic and art (their favored form seems to be an eerily slow communal dance that takes days or months to complete, moving from set tableau to tableau).

Otherwise, the various department stores are engaged in an eternal war of assassination and sabotage with all rival factions.

There are hints in faerie lore of entities called "Dressmakers" which rule over the mannequins in some unspecified capacity. Perhaps it is an honorific title or office bestowed on mannequin leaders; perhaps it indicates a second species of chimera. The most disturbing hypothesis, however, is also the one that textual evidence seems to support best: The "Dressmakers" who rule the mannequins may not even be sentient beings at all, but simple inanimate objects that the mannequins have "liberated" from human manufacturers and now venerate as mute and uncaring gods.

## The Clockwork Court

Composed of representatives from all the countless types of machinery with complex moving parts, this court is dominated by robots and intricate robotic toys. There is a split within this court between older clockworks (who tend to be bulky automata made from actual clockwork between 1600 and 1900) and the younger robots (who tend to be made with much more sophisticated technology in this century) that mirrors the larger split within the inanimate world between Craft and Factory. However, many prominent clockworks are very active within the Factory, and, in fact, it was a cabal of clockwork engineers who built and still maintain the infamous People Factories. The robots, for their part, tend to have been built wholly within Factory environments, and so do not fully comprehend what their elders mean when they talk about "soul" or "Dreamers," although a few famous individuals have found Craft along the way.

Many members of both courts of the Automata do not have humaniform bodies, nor do they feel the need for same. Ones who do possess human forms are generally stronger and more resistant to damage than human beings, although many are made vulnerable by extremely fragile internal workings. Despite appearances to the contrary, even robots cannot be constructed to be identical to other clockworks — every member of this faerie court begins as a unique entity, even though more radical Factory adherents try to erase this uniqueness (by "removing their faces") in the name of the movement. Many incorporate human parts or likenesses for additional Glamour and longevity. Such gestures can be as simple as taking on the likeness of the crafter's dead child or as sinister as using dead humans as host-bodies for computerized brains.

The čapeks are the hard-line ideological core of the Factory Movement, the inanimic faction that engineered such "advances" as the mass-produced mannequins and the Junk Gardens. The čapeks are also the prime movers behind the Makers War against the Sylvan Empire. From their industrial fortresses, these robots and old clockworks marshal the forces of artifice to pour millions of sidewalkers onto the grass and enslave whole councils of metals and stone.

Refined and aristocratic, the copelli tend to have training in antique pursuits such as chess (there is an entire circle of copelli known as the chess-players) or harpsichord playing, but

## Engine Poison

This substance can be found in the wild in the form of small, milky quartz crystals at the roots of oak trees. Many older changelings store their Engine Poison in old pill bottles. When applied to any engine or motor-driven device, these crystals will render it completely inert and malfunctioning. The possibilities for pranks are endless; favorite manners of application include pouring Engine Poison down a fuel intake and imbedding it in automobile wheel rims. The foobar are rumored to be working on a special powdered form of Engine Poison that they can use to coat removable disks, which would then apply it into the internal works of computers.



many are also capable magicians as well — the first cabal who formed the Factory were copelli, although the rising numbers of the čapeks have since begun to force their creators, the copelli, from positions of power. “Traditionalist,” or crafter, copelli, which compose the majority, have always been mortally ashamed of this betrayal, and many work from their own places of power against the “renegade philosophy.”

Between copelli and robots are the rotwangs. The rotwangs are a loose society of copelli (and a few rogue robots) who eschew the politics of Craft versus Factory in order to pursue solitary existences of contemplation, experimentation and self-discovery. Many are fiercely romantic entities, obsessed with the differences between inanimate and mortal, soulless and ensouled, to a degree that only the ondines (among all the inanimate) can appreciate. Some among the rotwangs yearn to pass among the meat people as one of the crowd, living a meat life as well as they are able. Others, more sinister, experiment on human beings and meat changelings in order to discover just what it is about meat that produces the “soul,” and how it can be acquired.

Last, and rarest, are the alberti. Extremely idiosyncratic creations of the antique Greeks, Romans and earlier civilizations, they are the true masters of the automata, being the first and most Glamorous of their kind. Bronze heads that speak, prophetic moving statues, huge temple juggernauts — the alberti are few in number these days, but the ones who remain are powerful, even though many have gone quite mad. It is said among lesser toys that the alberti play strange games among one another, in which such events as the Making War and the Factory Movement are only passing tactics.

## Quickmadness and Dumōmadness

As the Making War continues to grow more desperate and the quality of artificial bodies grows poorer, the entire realm of Capecia undergoes increasingly severe spasms — power failures, resource crises or destruction of irreplaceable machinery. Increasing numbers of the Inanimae suffer from the declining condition of their husks, which either wear down and can no longer be repaired or else are mass-produced with such poor quality that they must be changed almost constantly. The former condition results in a gradual but inexorable slowing of inanimate consciousness and activity: Dumbmadness. The latter causes irrational elation and shortened attention span: Quickmadness.

In recent years, the great floating city has lurched and drooped ominously closer to the ground, and at current rates of decay, it will fall to earth sometime soon.

## Irrgarten: The Labyrinthine Knot

“Q: How far can you follow the Knot before you come out the other side?”

“A: Forever!”

— Riddle of the Cat’s Cradle

Where the winding trods cross and come together, there you find the Irrgarten. This realm is the source and center of dreams of wandering along tangled, branching paths — whether





those paths are the corridors of a stony labyrinth, the threads of a cat's cradle or the overgrown trails of the forest bramble, they are all faces of the Irrgarten. All who come here intentionally to seek trodcraft or other wisdom must face the possibility that they may never find their way out again. Individuals unlucky enough to find their way here accidentally are doomed, unless they have both luck and wit on their side.

The Irrgarten itself is a vast, apparently circular maze formed by narrow pathways between tall, dense hedges. These hedge walls, or "Brambles," have grown wild throughout most of the maze, becoming thorny canopies overhead or even blocking off pathways entirely. A number of Dreamers have commented on the fact that, while the hedges are uniformly green and luxuriant, nothing else can grow in the Irrgarten. The pathways and occasional clearings between the walls are covered only with a fine, white dust — more than barren, this dust is actively poisonous to plants and other living things.

Each of the corridors of the Irrgarten maze is a trod that weaves into the dominion from elsewhere and weaves back out again. Up and down the corridors, Dreamers and lost chimerical creatures wander, searching for the Eye of the Dance, the legendary chamber at the center of the labyrinth where all the secrets of the Dream are kept safe. It is said that within the Eye are unique books, written in the easily forgotten language of Deep Dreams, that contain the keys to Arcadia. It is also said that at the center of this chamber is a bottomless, circular well, the waters of which grant the Siochain their immortality and all others bliss and freedom from Banality. If anyone has found the Eye of the Dance, no one has admitted it in public. More likely, the tangled trods of the Irrgarten have been knotted together by the Shattering to form an impassable knot that never goes anywhere but never ends.

## Escapes from the Labyrinth

The weaving corridors of the maze can take a traveler to any point within the Dreaming short of Arcadia itself, if she is willing to take the time and effort to explore (or fortunate enough to have a good teacher).

On the other hand, according to dream lore, if a traveler could somehow find her way outside the labyrinth without weaving into another realm, she would face a limitless white desert, blasted and featureless. Perhaps it is lucky that no one who has come to the Irrgarten has managed to find (or make) such an exit. All who have tried have found only endless branching corridors and have gone mad with frustration, have given up or are searching still. Since the Irrgarten Brambles themselves appear to grow quickly in the white dust, it is quite possible that the labyrinth itself is spreading to fill the outer desert.

It is possible to cut, climb or burn the Brambles in order to "cheat" or take short cuts through the maze. This approach is perfectly acceptable to the Irrgarten, and even the obscenely fast-growing hedges need time to erase the signs of the destruction wrought by generations of lost and desperate Dreamers. The realm is pitted with deep scars, burned patches and jagged "tunnels" through the Brambles. Most of these modifications

seem to make the Irrgarten more confusing and difficult to navigate.

## Legendary Framework

The Hearthland of the Eiluned, Irrgarten is one of the great enigmas of the faerie world, and one of the places where only faeries can see the truth. Essentially, the Irrgarten is the writhing coils of the World Serpent, the convoluted pathways at the belly of the beast, the knotted heart of the world that lies at the center and crossroads of all the trods.

It is the Labyrinth, but it is not a place of evil or madness. From the changeling perspective, it is not a fallen part of the world.

### The Cat in the Cradle

A curious and little-seen entity, the Cat in the Cradle is the capricious overlord of the Irrgarten and its knotted trods. Some describe him as an unenchanted and strictly normal human, who happens to be the best poet of his generation, a royal lineage of the spirit passed on from Cat to Cat. Others, less charitable (or less fond of cats), consider him a demon or other nightmare creature.

Rather, the knotwork and interwoven geometry here represents the weavework of Dán itself: the eye of the knitting needle of fate. This is the Cat's Cradle. As the place-that-is-the-convergence-of-trods, the Irrgarten is best described by the trod formations that most effectively lead to it: Hopscotch. The Labyrinth of Daedalus. The Hedge Maze (and its spontaneously generated ghost-cousins, the Crop Circles). At the center of the Irrgarten lies a bottomless well, from which anything, external or interior, may be drawn up into the Labyrinth.

While the various sorcerers, trodcrafters and wayfarers who occasionally pass through the Irrgarten are certainly renowned in their own circles, they are also transitory denizens of the realm at best. Visitors who remain often go mad after a time, joining one of the various apocalyptic cults that have formed among the labyrinth wanderers. Others simply walk until they waste away.

### The Wolfen Masque

An enigma of the Irrgarten: What are snow-white wolves doing in a labyrinth? The wolves occasionally run through the maze or sit staring at visitors with sadly communicative eyes, but they neither speak nor interact with other chimera in any meaningful way.

The Cat in the Cradle claims to know what the wolves signify, but he does not tell. He says only that they are dead, which has caused the Wolfen Masque to become something of an ill omen among trodwalkers.



According to the mythologies of these labyrinth cults, there was, at one time, a minotaur near the secret room at the center of the maze. If so, it is clearly a creature to be feared, as most of the wanderers appear to be terrified of encountering it and flee at the slightest sign that it is near.

## Ariké: The Empire of Regret

Whatever you have lost is here. The friends and lovers you will not see again, the roads you will never walk, the moments you would pay much to live again — all are here. This is Ariké, where dreams of what was and what could have been are born.

Once the most heartbreakingly beautiful of all the Deep Countries, Ariké has lapsed into a damp and sullen malaise. It rains constantly here, a cold, incessant drizzle that drowns the evergreen forests and swells the rivers to overflowing. The fields have long since been washed away in the rain, but there are few chimera remaining to care. All who still dwell in Ariké are primarily creatures of sorrow and memory or outland interlopers come to loot the ageless treasures of the realm. All others have fallen into a troubled and dreamless sleep, a dream of forgotten dreams.

Above the drowning land, locked in a spiral tower without windows, the twin heirs to the realm wander as prisoners. According to old legends and new gossip, they were once true fae who were captured and jailed in Ariké for their own protection, to keep them safe from the agonies of time and Banality. Now, the Dreaming might crumble and die, but the twins will live on, safe and sad forever.

It is said by Kithain who should know better that Ariké is the hidden secret of all that has gone wrong with the faerie World of Wonders to turn it into a World of Darkness. At some point now lost, the Dreaming and the Earth went astray, and the heart of Ariké was broken. The beautiful world weeps and locks itself away from the painful future; the rightful rulers are bewitched by their guardians and kept in isolation from their realm. The land is laid waste and all suffer.

## The Glass Highnesses

Reshiam and Erikelle are their names, and their hearts have been removed for safekeeping by the oldest and most trustworthy henchman of their father, the king. They are among the most beautiful things of the Dreaming, pale and soulful, with the haunted look of fine porcelain dolls.

Perhaps they were once sidhe of Arcadia; they do not remember anything but their imprisonment in the Nautilus Tower. They are chimerical creatures now, fully caught in the Dream. Having lost their hearts, their bodies have transformed into fragile glass, and were they ever to laugh, it would sound like celestes or other glassy bells.

They are further bewitched in their imprisonment. Magic has taken the ability to speak from Reshiam; unless the curse is broken, he will never speak with his own voice again. Erikelle cannot touch food without growing deathly ill. The thought of food saddens her, but no matter how hungry she grows, she must subsist on clear juices and peanuts. Because their glass

selves are so fragile, both are forbidden to engage in strenuous exercise or even walk more than a few steps — the Tower's staff is afraid that one or both of the heirs to the throne will fall and shatter, dooming Ariké to an even bleaker state of affairs.

Once, early in the highnesses' imprisonment, many heroes came to the Tower to rescue them and their realm. All failed, and now the dead time between heroes stretches almost unbearably. To ease the boredom, both Reshiam and Erikelle spend their days staring into mirrors and pretending that they are, in fact, gazing through windows at the world outside their tower.

According to some gossip, they would dearly love to be true fae again; according to others, they were never fae in the first place, but would like to be, if only they had the strength and opportunity to try. In either case, the cure for their condition is the old one: true love, overcoming all obstacles.

## The Minor Colonel

Until such time as the curse on the twins is broken, the Minor Colonel serves as regent of Ariké. He is the real power of the realm, with the ability to control its watery magic and marshal what demoralized troops still remain loyal. The Five Tame Birds of Ariké patrol the borders of the realm for dangerous intruders, although not without reservations. The Ramshackle Battalion and the secret agents of the Brain Trust scour the sodden houses and schools to enforce obedience, interrogating any who appear disloyal to the Colonel's policies.

None of which should come as any surprise, because it was the Colonel who bewitched the twins and stole their hearts in the first place. He claims (with typically chimerical logic) that he acted only in their best interest, to keep them safe from the dangers and heartache of the world outside the Dreaming. He says he is only trying to protect the children for his friend, the late king, their father.

The Minor Colonel is a chimerical personage made out of newsprint and corrugated cardstock in the shape of a large, strong man. To combat drafts and molder, he wears a suit of armor at all times. He is quite proud of his elaborate mustaches, has forgotten his name (if ever he had one) and should probably be considered quite mad.

## The Nautilus Tower

Spiralling gracefully out of a hill at the center of the realm, the Tower has no doors or windows, save for an aperture at the very tip, many hundreds of feet above the ground. What little necessary communication the Colonel allows is done by the Tame Birds and the Colonel's own allies, the Bee-Folk, who bring supplies in through the aperture and carry the Colonel's edicts back out.

Within the smooth halls and empty ballrooms of the Tower, melancholy Dreamers wander and brood, or else huddle in the corners and weep for the past. Otherwise, the Tower sleeps, stirring only for the passage of the prince or princess, as they constantly search for escape. The musical instruments and telephones are silent; the only sound is rain falling.



Because the idiosyncratic structure of the Tower causes it to leak in the constant rain, the Colonel must keep moving his court to higher and higher levels as the lower floors flood. In an unending effort to prevent the water from rising, his servants have taken to walling up unused rooms and nailing doors shut. Hundreds of rooms, including an important percentage of the legendary Archive of the Tower, have been sealed behind thick layers of wax and tar. Other rooms become haphazard repositories for the magical standards and insignia of the realm, which are buried in piles of trash and abandoned in the rising water. It is said that the Colonel is particularly careful to leave the records of the old king to the waters, perhaps because the memory of his friend saddens him beyond bearing.

The wise say that the Nautilus Tower is the horn of the father of all unicorns, who lies buried under the realm. Ariké, according to legends, was built on his back, but one day he will rise to reassert his power. When that happens, perhaps the land will be destroyed, or healed, or both.

### Snail Graveyards

There are six known sites in the Dreaming to which the snails travel when they realize that they are dying. Because the way is difficult and dying snails travel slowly, most never make it to the graveyards and die somewhere along the way. In fact, one of the easiest ways for changelings to find the way to the nearest Snail Graveyard is to follow the fragmentary trail of snail shells underfoot. As one walks, the shells grow gradually thicker on the ground, and eventually one is in a Snail Graveyard. The oldest and strongest snails go to Ariké to die.

The Snail Graveyards are uniformly rainy, misty places with cool, vaguely fishy atmospheres, like those of mountain lakes, and they are carpeted with the small crunching shells of snails. They are ritual centers for many of the most secret branches of sea magic, especially ones that deal with deep healing, the tides and the Orchid Legacy. It is said that there are many mysteries to be found in the Snail Graveyards, and many old changelings send their protégés on quests to one or another of these sites to retrieve an item or to take the auspices there for use in divination. One legendary secret of the snails is the location and use of the Sangraal Armor, which comes under their magical jurisdiction. Another is the breaking of the curse on the Nautilus Tower and the freeing of the Prince and Princess of Ariké.

Each of the graveyards is guarded by one of the brothers called the Boys with Nautilus Hearts. These entities are beautiful adolescent males, pale in coloring, with sad eyes. Each is crippled in some way: one is blind, another is asthmatic, a third is lame, and so on. All share communion with snails and other shelled creatures and are polite but inscrutable. They are also expert in secret ways of waging war in the name of innocence

### The Barbarians

In the introspective chaos of the realm, even the Colonel's irrational fears have found an outlet. From all over the Dreaming, strange and selfish creatures have come to Ariké to feed on the unguarded and forgotten treasures of the realm. Creeping through the pine bushes that formerly kept intruders out, these greedy chimera feast on the rotting crops and rifle through the abandoned cottages. Those few decent folk who remain have grown wary and do not speak openly to outsiders, fearing that they are either barbarian looters or (worse) agents of the Colonel and his secret police.

As the land is bled white by the interlopers, the story of Ariké loses its splendor, despite being (if anything) truer than it ever was in the Golden Age of the Dreaming. As the gap between the old World of Wonders and the new World of Darkness continues to widen, Ariké continues to wash away with the rain, melting like a dream of sugar. Meanwhile, the hearts of the Dreamers who sustain the realm grow increasingly numb and glassy. Few dare to hope any longer for the coming of heroes or true love; the idea seems juvenile, overly idealistic. And so, the young prince and princess continue to forget the world they have never seen, and Winter grows closer.

### The Sangraal Armor

This set of full plate armor is apparently carved from a waxy stone like amber, and is, indeed, amber-colored. It is said to have a sliding faceplate, but no other facial openings, and to cover every inch of the body.

Donning the Sangraal Armor is a necessary step in achieving the Grail, but once it is donned, it can never be taken off until the Grail is achieved, or all gains will be lost and the seeker must start again from the beginning. Opinions vary as to whether the faceplate must remain shut at all times during the Grail Quest, or whether it may be opened for short periods. Beyond this knowledge, silence prevails.

## Depths of the Dream

Beyond even the vaguely charted waters of the Sea of Silver, the unfathomable depths of the Deep Dream continue onward until they reach the most primal secrets of the heart, the world and the Dreaming. Here, in the First Place, there are bounded salt oceans and bright tunnels, great walls and pillars of fire. Sometimes, the depths are stormy; sometimes they are still.

Whatever you have forgotten is in the depths, as well as whatever you have not yet seen — echoes of the Kings and



## The Heron Women and the Crawfish Men

These beings were born with Arcadia; they embody its great mysteries and serve as guardians of the fundamental seals and geasa of that realm. The history of Arcadia is littered with incidents of great heroes and sages seeking out the Heron Women or the Crawfish Men in times of need, although there are also many stories of the Hidden Cousins (as they are also known) appearing uninvited to give advice, make prophecy and, in general, repair the skein of stories when it has grown tangled.

The Hidden Cousins are divided into eleven Heron Women and eleven Crawfish Men, who serve as their spouses. It is said that the mysteries guarded by the Women are the ones that pertain specifically to the Seelie Way, while the Men are set over Unseeliness. Both groups take the form of various hybrids of human and heron (or crawfish, as the case may be), with each individual taking his or her own unique shape. Some Seelie supremacists say that the Crawfish Men lust after the graceful Heron Women and that the Herons disdain the ugliness of their counterparts, but no one truly wise actually believes such a thing. The Crawfishes and the Herons are husband and wife, and the whole of Faerie are their children; this is indisputable truth.

Many changeling heroes and sages have quested after one or another of the Hidden Cousins in order to learn his or her associated mystery. These quests tend to contain a

number of ordeals and tests before the seeker arrives at the hidden pool or lake in which the Hidden Cousin is currently making his or her home. Kithain who succeed must shoulder a geas in order to learn the mystery, but the nature of this geas is secret — to be known, the nature of the Hidden Cousins must be encountered face to face. At the end, though, the quester comes away from the water with knowledge of one of the old magics of Faerie, and can say that she has seen one of the mysteries.

It is said that, in the old days, the Heron Women and the Crawfish Men would, of their own volition, come to great seekers and tutor such heroes in the ways of Faerie without charge or Ban. This practice has not taken place in some time, however.

There are rumors of a single entity set above both the Women and the Men to govern all the mysteries, but most faeries do not concern themselves with this being. Some believe that this highest entity is the mother of the woman crowned with stars and referred to by the human magicians as Luna, the High Queen of Arcadia. Others believe that it is the elusive being listed in the Green and Black Compendia as the Mwa. If so, this being, the Mwa, is the embodiment of the Sigil of Faerie, the first Gift, for which the tithe to Hell is due. Still others believe that no such thing as a Mwa exists — of the handful of changelings who claim to have met the One, nearly all are known liars.

Queens of Arcadia, Gwydion and Ailill and all the rest, along with the founding and sealing of Arcadia itself. The explosive birth of the world is still going on here, as if for the first time, alongside the premonition of the world's end. Bang and whimper, whimper and bang. In the Deep Dreaming, time does not exist, and so the beginning and the end are always found here together.

Within the flood of echoes, the eleven crystalline realms of the Oneiroi whirl and ring, churning the stuff of Dream in their wake. One of these realms was once known as Arcadia; now, it is sealed from within, and any who depart from it can never return. As for the other Oneiric Realms, those of Moros and Hemera, Aether and Ker, Hypnates and Dán, Charis and Momus, Diké and Protea, little is known. Few have ever entered them, and none have departed in the same fashion they came.

Beyond these so-called "lesser" Oneiric Realms (and whether they are truly less splendid than Arcadia, none can say), there are only Night and Silence, bringing the total to 13. Travelers report a strange phenomenon: Beyond Silence, at the deepest possible realm of the Dreaming, the world opens up upon itself and darkness becomes transmuted into wonder.

Here, all worlds are one, but changelings care little for such things.

## Deep if by Sea: The Sea of Silver

The limitless ocean of light, twilight and shadows that becomes the Deep Dreaming, and the Black Court of the fomorians; the Sea that has a thousand thousand names, one for every heart that dreams; these infinite reaches divide the Far Dreaming from the Deep Dreaming. Call it the Depthless Sea, or the Sea of Eventide, or the Twilight Sea, or the Ocean of Dream, or even the Tempest. All journeys that hope to take leave of the Far Dream must take leave, also, of the clearly marked boundaries of the Silver Path and all other comfortable guideposts and trail markings.

There are isles and strange ships on this sea, and great ruined temples filled with the half-forgotten memories of humanity. Meantime, there are fomorians and other old horrors plying the ancient waters or lurking beneath the surface. Time has no power here, and Banality is overwhelmed by the sheer volume of Dreamstuff that has collected in the Sea of Silver. The only sign here that Winter is coming to the world at all is the fact that the Sea has withdrawn so deeply from the Earth and is now so difficult to reach. Once one reaches its shores, however, Winter is only a memory, the dream of a dream, and a fast-fading one at that.



## The Riddle of Silver

The Sea of Silver has always existed, depthless and infinite. Somewhere here is Arcadia, the rootless isle churning at the center of the boundless ocean, forbidden empire of joy and wonder. Also here are the enigmatic, yet vaguely archetypal Ocean Giants, who sleep fitfully at the bottom of the Sea and occasionally rise to the surface to fight with, eat, or give wisdom to smaller souls. Some say the Giants are the Titans, or the Tuatha de Danaan. Others say that each of the Giants carries an entire Dreaming within its vast body, which would make them another face for the vast Oneiroi themselves, the omnipresent Dreamers of the Dream.

The Riddle of Silver, quite well known, is actually two riddles. First, the whole of the Sea is contained within the pool at the heart of the Irrgarten, which is itself contained within the Nautilus Heart shared by the guardians of the Snail Graveyard. The big contains the little, which in turn contains the big again. At the center of the human heart lies the bottomless well of the universe, and vice versa.

Second, the Sea is Silver not because the Silver Path has faded out this deep into the Dreaming, but because the Path is so close and so strong that it has overflowed its shape. The Sea is the ultimate trod, the sum of all Silver Paths poured together. In the Deep, meaning does not disappear so much as it becomes so blindingly obvious that it is hard to see clearly. The more sacred, the deeper the dream, the less there is to say.

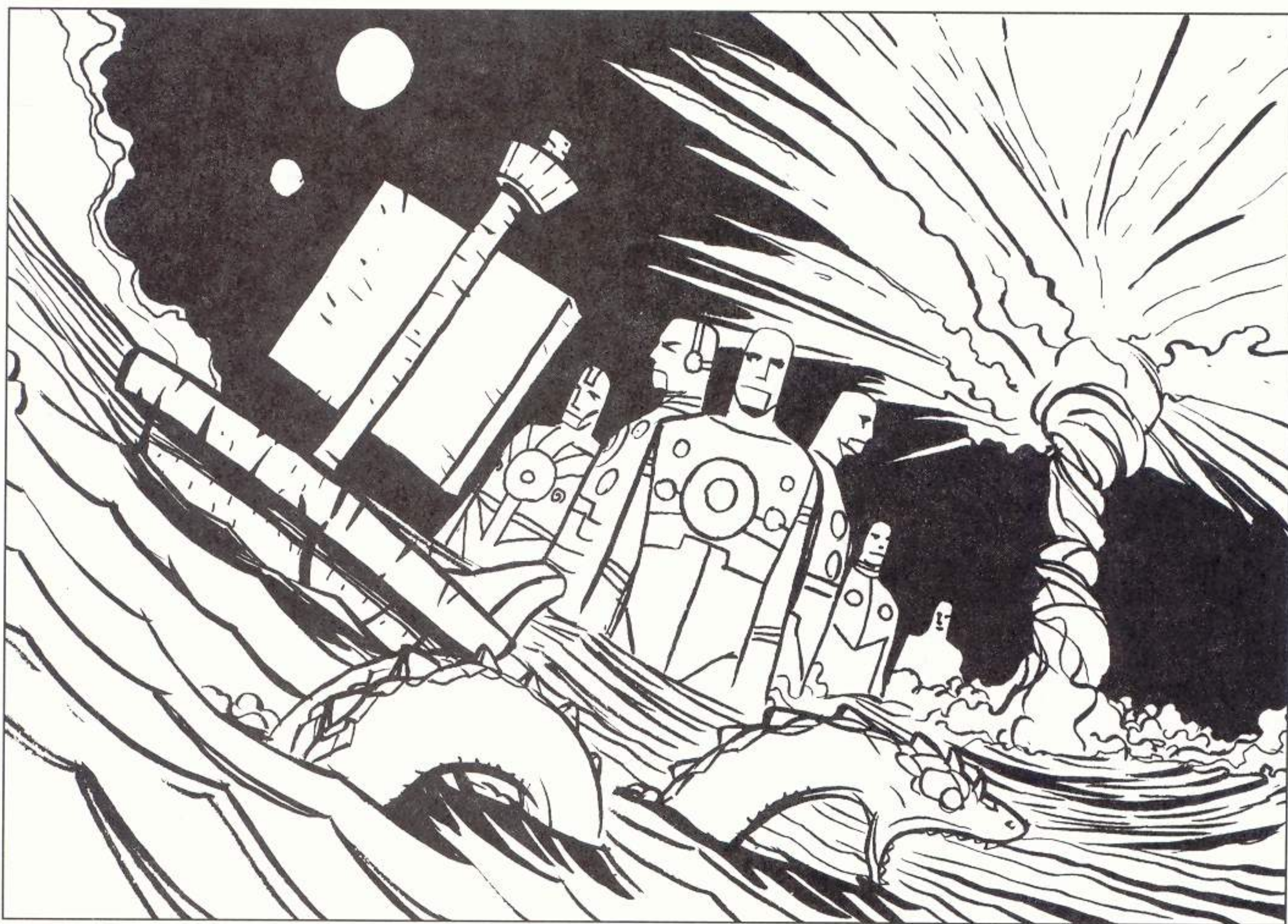
## Stone Ships

These sailing ships are made out of heavy limestone or another mineral substance. While most went dead in the Sundering and became inert rock formations, a few still float and can be piloted by merchant changeling crews. They are generally unsuitable for attacking other ships because of their lack of speed and fine maneuverability; such tactics are recommended for captains of Swan Ships and other vessels.

## The Ocean's Heart

The Sea is incomprehensibly vast, forming the final and deepest layer of the Dreaming short of the timeless reaches of the Deep Dreaming itself. As such, it includes limitless numbers of unique islands and perhaps even new Dream Continents, each of which might be filled with its own chimerical peoples and empires. A voyager could literally spend forever exploring the Sea of Silver and never finish charting its expanse. The true underlying difficulty in sailing the Sea is not boredom, but in finding your way back when, eventually, you have seen enough.

Still, at the center of the Sea (or so it is said), something strange happens. According to some, there is a vast whirlpool or waterfall or cataract that sucks all the flotsam of the Dream-





ing down into itself, casting it into some unknown and perhaps unknowable abyss beyond. According to others, this phenomenon is not a cataract but a waterspout, sending the waters of the Sea eternally up into the sky.

By contrast, according to yet others, the center of the Sea is a place of absolute calm. There, the voyager may find a small isle, which is Arcadia. Of course, the fact that the Sea of Silver is infinite means that its "center" would be rather difficult to encounter, if it exists at all; all voyagers but the most dedicated should treat such tales as rumors as they relate to the Riddle of Silver.

## Dwellers in the Deep of the Dream

While any aspect of the Dreaming can find its way to the great Sea, the oceanic dominion is home to untold chimerical races and strange elder creatures, most of which no longer exist anywhere else in the Dreaming. Under the best of conditions, these creatures' motivations and attitudes toward smaller faeries are ambiguous, and under the worst, the Sea is home to the most terrible monsters of the Dreaming. In addition to the great Giants and other apparently divine entities such as the Constellar Court of astrological chimera and the great Oceanic water-masters, the careless voyager can encounter the Green Court of the fomorians, the oldest and least merciful of the three elder courts. Compared to such creatures, the Wave Dragons and Ocean Giants are almost welcome sights.

Beyond the Red and White, beyond Glamour and Banality, the Green Fomorians lie in their chains at the bottom of the Sea. Unlike their lesser cousins, the Green could not be bound by the Arcadians, unless by their own consent, which they refused to give until the chains were brought to them by the smallest of the Arcadians at the end of the Last Battle of Chakravada. When the chains were brought, the Green maimed the child who offered them, locked the manacles on themselves and slowly retreated under the waves of the Sea, while the Arcadians stood guard and shuddered as the ground shook and the waves pounded.

The role played by the Green within the Fomorian Dream is perhaps incomprehensible to smaller faeries.

## The Empire of the Depthless

As the majestic personifications of the great ocean currents and coastlines, the Depthless rarely enter into extended alliances with the changelings of the land, but instead pursue a dark and fatalistic introspection. Like lesser ondines, few have voices, and they communicate instead through eye contact and gesture. The Depthless (also known as Oceanids) are almost infinitely subtle and secretive, and may well be pursuing some complicated agenda — either a magical ritual or a work of art.

In general, the ondines (or the inanimate spirits concerned with the Waters) are the Inanimae most fascinated of all by humanity, and stories of ondines falling in love with human beings are fairly common. Wistful, nomadic, highly concerned with memory and forgetting, these mer live in a half-world inaccessible even to the dreamiest of meat changelings and filled with fancies, illusions, shapeshifting and mirages.

They keep their secrets very close to their watery breasts. To most outsiders, gatherings of the mer are strangely sad

events, for, as the saying goes, "An ondine is thinking of goodbye before she says hello."

## Home Realms

Most dreamers are unaware of the realms they create, or the power they possess. The mundane world tells them that their visions are not real and that their imaginary friends don't exist at all.

### The Promethean Giants

These huge, rare entities possibly predate Arcadia. In the oldest legends of the birth of that realm, the Promethean Giants (whom some believe to be the Tuatha de Danaan) are already there, watching sadly from the shadows. They speak only the oldest form of Arcadian argot, peppered with numerous words that not even the most ancient changelings alive can remember. They do not appear to be the product of Faerie Glamour, and may, in fact, not be the product of any human Dreaming.

The Giants take the form of huge humanoids composed of some pliable, almost rubbery, golden substance. Judging from textual evidence (few changelings ever see one Giant in their lives, although there are legends that describe lonely gatherings of dozens of Giants), each is over a hundred feet tall, and a few have reportedly extended to at least six times that height. Their bodies are continually in minor flux, which gives them their characteristic "liquid" or "soft" appearance.

Each Promethean Giant that has been reported since the birth of Arcadia has been a paramount master of at least one realm of faerie magic, with specific and idiosyncratic affiliations within that realm. These affiliations affect the Giant's personal form, with each Giant possessing a strange hybrid corona of animal, vegetable, or mineral limbs that constantly move in tidal currents across its huge golden body like solid clouds or rootless islands. No account of Giant breeding should be taken as authoritative, nor (despite accounts of the submergence of the Atlantean Empire) is it known whether the Prometheans can die.

The Giants use their old magic to serve their own unfathomable agendas (cryptically referred to as "the Sad Conversation"). They have both destroyed and created entire changeling realms over the vastness of time.

Of course, it wasn't always so. Before the Age of Reason, and notably in the Middle Ages, dreamers actually believed that their dreams and visions were real. The Europeans believed that these dreams were sent by divine or infernal providence.

It was a fine time for fae; mortals and Prodigals paid Kithain the respect changelings feel they deserve. Of course, all that changed with the Shattering. The Age of Reason at the end of this cataclysm was nearly a death-knell for fae in Europe



and the Mediterranean. The cold, crushing blow of Banality was more than many could take in those times, and whole communities of kith who could not either escape to Arcadia or find refuge in a freehold were Undone. The remaining changelings who lacked an escape route must have felt as if the ship were sinking, and all they could do was climb up the masts.

A group of desperate Kithain in the 17th century attempted a dangerous experiment to find the way back to Arcadia. These reckless (and powerful) fae thought of themselves as visionaries and set to work: They invited the greatest poets, scholars and creative minds of Europe and locked themselves away in a fancy parlor room, talking about philosophy for hours. This device was later called the salon, and it was the first ever. Unlike other salons, however, this one was not a mere bantering of ideas. The fae who organized the occasion had an agenda: They wanted to create a Rapture that would open a nearby defunct trod back to their home. They subtly wove into the topic of conversation the image of a doorway; then, a path; next, a long series of twists and turns; and finally...Arcadia.

Obviously, the Dreamers never realized what was really happening. They merely thought that they were all engaging in witty and exhausting repartee. At the end of the salon, the Dreamers, more weary than they ought to be, dragged themselves off to bed. The changelings excitedly rushed to the trod to see whether they were successful. What they saw in the glade that concealed the trod was a solid doorway made of sticks and leaves, rapidly disintegrating from the bottom upward. Without even considering the consequences, they all rushed through the door as it crumbled into a pile of kindling. Desperation makes changelings do stupid things. Anyway, these Kithain were lucky, but not in the way they'd hoped. They never found the way back to Arcadia, for the makeshift trod was beginning to disintegrate, even as they raced through it. They rode their fastest chimera and used Wayfare until they were literally Undone from lack of Glamour, but all of that effort was a waste. Indeed, they found the end of the rainbow, but the pot of gold they all wished for wasn't Arcadia.

Because they were all changelings and not true fae, their connection to Arcadia was not as strong. The memory was distant, and the Shattering did not make it any better. As often happens when Kithain try to control the flow of Glamour, the result was something unexpected. The trod led not to Arcadia but to a newly created realm that was a collage of the assembled changelings' notions of home. The overall realm, somewhat smaller than it is now, was a meshing of each one's idea of a perfect world. The lands bordering the regions resembled a giant's poor first attempt at puzzle-making. The land-forms alternately interlocked and jutted out in jagged blocks and sections. The chimerical animals and buildings were all faint and quivering, and raw Dreamstuff was crackling electrically in the air. Even as they watched, some of the chimera faded away into nothing. A decision had to be made: should the changelings stay and craft the realm some more, see if they could reach Arcadia from where they were or return to the mundane world and possibly try again? All agreed that they were too far away from Arcadia even to try to reach it. Some thought the new realm a waste of time, while most of the rest stayed there and

tried to make it more stable. A few wandered off into the Dreaming and were never heard from again.

Ultimately, this story ends in tragedy for all. The participating Dreamers burned out, creatively speaking, and slipped into obscurity. Kithain society in the mundane world was scandalized by the news of this heinous use of Dreamers, and the commoner nobles banished the returning changelings from their lands.

The fae who stayed with the realm fed and nurtured the chimerical lands with their Glamour (and through occasional raids into the mundane world to Ravage dreamers) and created a version more fully realized than when they began. Bedlam caught up with these fae, which added more — and wilder — elements to the realm (the Funhouse appeared in Balloon when the realm's creator slipped into Bedlam).

Nearly all of those Kithain are gone now, slipped away totally into Bedlam, or killed in the internecine wars upon one another. What they left behind were three provinces, each favoring a given kith. The surviving realm provinces are Myrmitown (for the boggans), the Tunnels (sluagh) and Balloon (pooka).

## Myrmitown

The most startling things about Myrmitown are the architecture and the giant chimerical ants the boggans use as beasts of burden. These ants are utilized for everything from food to transportation. The boggans here are so adept at breeding such chimera that they have a different type of ant for each type of work. Larger ants are used for transportation and smaller ants are bred for finer-detailed work. There are also ants for show pageants, gladiatorial combats, and guard duty. There are even a few strange ant-chimera with limited intelligence. These beings walk upright and possess a humanoid shape. They understand human language, barely, but can execute only one command at a time, and they must thoroughly complete a given task before they can receive another. These chimera, called frains, are commonly used as soldiers and bodyguards, for they are strong and lightning-fast. The three villages of Myrmitown are more like Anasazi-style warrens than human dwellings. The residents live in ornately carved, interconnected chambers under the hills they call home. These chambers and burrows are all massively decorated with pictorial images and calligraphy of Myrmitown's history, culture and relations with the other Home Realms.

The cities are a social beehive of gossip, innuendo, and (usually) nonviolent, Machiavellian intrigue. The big event is the annual Myrmitownian Country Faire, where ant-breeders show their prize ants and compete for dross craftwork. There are market-booths, storytelling competitions and a costume ball in the evening. The best contestants in each event win the invisible (but no less valuable, in boggan society) currency of social prestige. The government is a plutocracy of the most powerful boggans. These captains of industry also serve in the Myrmtownian governing body called the Synod. Outsiders are usually welcome, but the boggans are quite proud of their crafts and protective of their techniques. Most of the intrigue in Myrmitown involves schemes to steal each others' craftworking and ant-breeding methods. The surest way to infuriate a Myrmitownian is to note the imperfec-



tions in her craftwork or to try to steal her secret vermilion-and-cobalt-striped-ant breeding technique.

## The Tunnels

Myrmitown was the first of the Home Realms to be fully created. The boggans made a series of sewer-tunnels underneath their cities, and the sluagh expanded upon this basic framework to create their realm.

The Tunnels are a labyrinthine underground network. It is very easy to get lost here; there is little or no light, and there are vast chasms that have opened up in the ground recently. Even sluagh familiar with the area sometimes get lost, as formerly traversable passages become impassable because of a gorge or a rockfall. There are also many dangerous chimerical inhabitants. Most are friendly to the sluagh, but occasional attacks against sluagh by insane chimera are not unknown.

Non-sluagh are strictly forbidden, and the few entrances wide enough for non-sluagh to slip through are guarded by chimerical giant rats and alligators, the latter spawned from the urban myth of sewer alligators. The other entrances are so small that only a sluagh could get through them. These entryways include Occam's Razor, a long, thin wedge of a tunnel, about six inches in diameter and 70 feet in length, that leads into the Tunnels' Great Hall. It is called Occam's Razor because sloping planes descend to carnivorous chimerical stalagmites hundreds of feet below on either side of the tunnel-wedge. Anyone who attempts to get across by creeping along the slopes is likely to slip into the pit below (Dexterity + Athletics, difficulty 9; each success gets you 5 feet closer, and a botch means you fall in). There are many such traps in the Tunnels. Most of these traps are not mechanical and many rely upon dangerous natural formations in the rock. The sluagh are clever, but they are not as good with their hands as are boggans, and they do not trust Myrmitownians enough to ask them to come into the tunnels and install some traps (would you?).

The Tunnels are an excellent place for sluagh to go when pursued by non-sluagh enemies, or when they seek sources of information. There are fewer than 40 sluagh here at any time, as the Tunnels provide little in the way of food. The only sustenance available comes from barter with the other Home Realms (for information, which the sluagh are loath to do, as they always feel the "outsiders" are trying to rip them off), from what the inhabitants can bring in or from the rare, desperate killing of a giant gator for meat (and cool boots).

The most significant feature of the Tunnels is the Great Hall, a massive area with ceilings so high that no amount of light illuminates them. Sound echoes terribly in this place, and any communication above a whisper is impossible to understand. Noncarnivorous stalagmites in various sizes randomly dot the floor. Some of these stalagmites are carved into unusual sculptural shapes by sluagh of an artistic bent.

Also on the floor is a series of sewer grates. These grates have their perspectives reversed, so that the downward view through a grate reveals things as if one looked up from below it. The grates randomly shift views among many scenes above many grates, in and out of the Dreaming (no one knows if the grates ever showed

a scene from Arcadia). The view through the grates is uncontrollable, and it switches randomly. A patient sluagh can learn a lot of "secret" tidbits through these grates.

The few permanent inhabitants of the Tunnels are happy here. It is a perfect home for a sluagh: lonely, barren, alternately dank or stuffy, cold, dark, and haunted, of all things, by a chimerical ghost. This ghost is relatively harmless. It sticks to the usual popular conceptions of ghosts: chain-rattling noises, blood dripping from walls, moaning in the halls, etc. It resists all attempts to communicate and runs away from people who try to overpower it.

## Balloon

The first thing that greets a visitor who passes through one of the gates to Balloon is a stone sphinx who sits atop a pedestal and commands each inbound traveler to answer her riddles or "suffer the consequences." Failure to answer her riddles correctly results in the propulsion of the traveler high into the air (the pooka who created this chimerical mechanical sphinx saw too many Monty Python movies) and into a nearby pile of...well, it is not pleasant. The propulsion cantrip doesn't always work right, and several unfortunates have "missed the mark" and ended up with most of their bones broken. If a frustrated visitor attacks the sphinx, it immediately opens its mouth and whirls its head, giving off a deafening alarm. On the horizon, swarms of pooka soon appear aboard a host of dirigibles, carrying deadly pie-bombs and (literally) high-explosive seltzer-bottles.

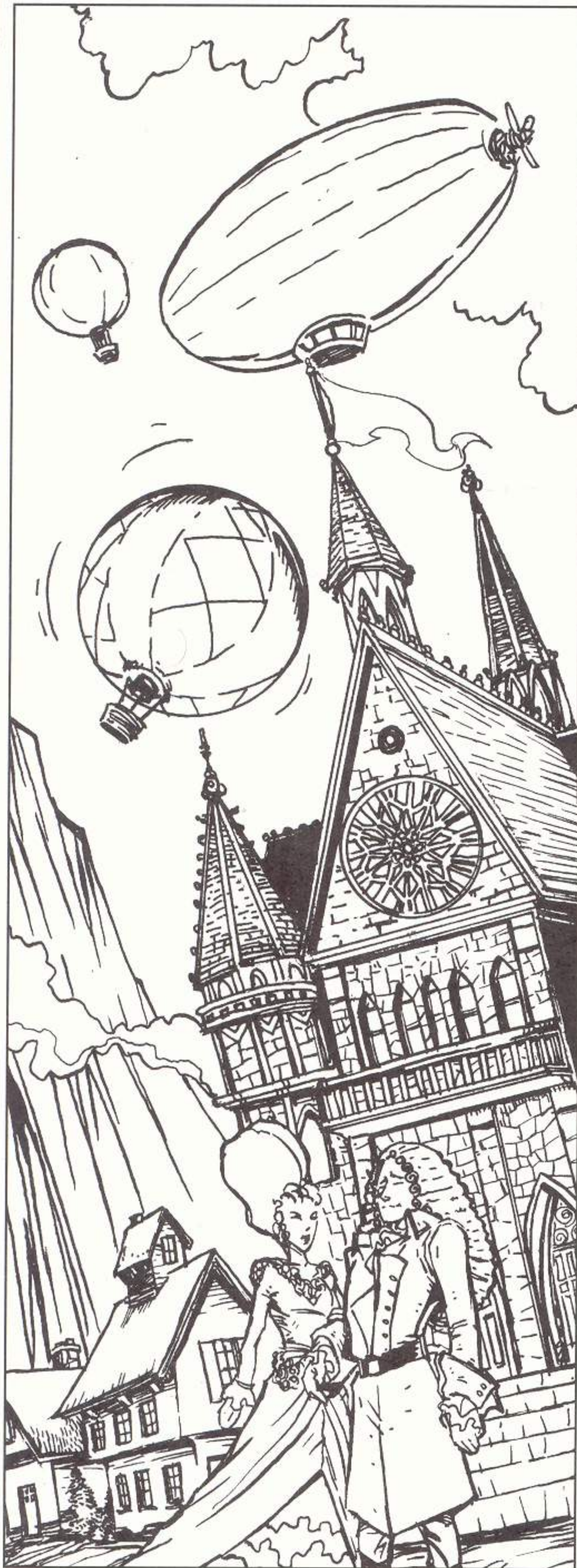
The only way to answer the sphinx correctly is to lie to every question, as only pooka would normally do. Repeating the answers of the previous traveler activates the propulsion cantrip, which tosses the unlucky mimic into the pile.

Once past the sphinx, the path winds through a series of mirrors set into the ground at weird angles. The mirrors all give a ridiculous cast to the viewer's reflected appearance. In the clearing ahead is a slate floor with a long hopscotch pattern chalked onto it. Attempting to walk straight through or to not hop in sequential order (Wits + Athletics, difficulty 6) causes the mirror images to come to life. They proceed to jeer and pelt their original with pies. Aside from the fact that the pie actually contains a blue dye and subtle corrosive that gradually eats away any nontreasure chimerical items, if not washed off, the citizens of Balloon realize that dye-stained immigrants are "no fun" and ostracize them (+2 difficulty to all rolls with Social Attributes because of the blue dye) until the stain is cleaned off.

There are a few more puzzles along the way, all testing how much "fun" the traveler is.

There are several entrances into Balloon, each with testing-traps along the way and frequent visitor traffic coming and going. Just about everyone is welcome, except for individuals of a more violent bent (an Unseelie redcap rolling into Balloon looking for supper is likely to be humiliated, bruised and finally bounced out, with his body beaten in a thousand places, if he lives through the bouncing). Even sidhe are welcome and sometimes accepted if they don't try to lord over everyone they see and do maintain an air of "fun." Of course, none of the entrance-traps or usual social gags can make any sidhe look ridiculous...but it doesn't stop most





Balloonians from trying.

The Alarums of Balloon, a series of chimerical security devices around the edges of this realm, are a call to arms for the Citizen Army, who climb aboard their dirigibles, zeppelins, combat balloons, and floating whatever to fight any menace.

The Citizen Army employs comical-looking weapons including jacks, glass marbles, little toy soldiers and toy tanks, but enemies of Balloon stop laughing when the weapons take effect. Some are explosive, but most of the weapons merely serve to incapacitate. However, if Balloonians are really mad at an invading army, they drop leaflets of "The Funniest Joke in the Realm" on the invaders. Of course, if the Citizen Army is victorious, the Balloon government sends flowers and heartfelt apologies to the survivors of the invading army. Comedy is not pretty.

Balloon is a commune, run by a communist collective. The last emperor of Balloon loved the idea of communism so much he voluntarily abdicated and let The People rule. Of course, prestige in the city is based on the best joke, publicly told riddle, or game invented. Little contests and riddle-games abound in social circles. This ubiquitous merriment often results in backbiting and blackballing for unfortunates who are feeling sad or who aren't funny. Balloon is given to ridiculous pomp and silly pageantry, and the social climate and intrigue is similar in tone to the court of France, 18th century.

There are a few buildings and residences that dot the landscape, but no cities. Wild streams and rivers and lush, amply forested mountain ranges divide the region into fertile, unpolluted ecosystems. An abundance of animals inhabits these areas. The Balloon sheriffs and wardens are on the watch for anyone who ignores the "Be kind to animals" signs posted everywhere. Anyone hurting or killing an animal becomes a wanted criminal, as this activity amounts to assault or first-degree murder. All Balloonians are vegetarian, and with good reason...no one can be sure if an animal is really an animal or a loved-one.

Most of the buildings are small, simple, brightly painted dwellings for housing and shops. There are three buildings that are larger than one story:

### The Balloon Armory

This large, columnar brick structure with huge arches perforating it (it would collapse in the mundane world) houses weapons and military airships. It is usually guarded by a small standing army. A tall pole stretches up its center. There are no stairs in the building; people move between floors by holding onto the pole and calling out their desired level. Immediately, the cantrip in the Forged pole slides the person up or down to that floor. Most of the weapons are stored in the basement in case of a combustible accident.

### Toyroom

A square, boxlike building decorated as a giant birthday cake (which it actually is, but the cake is very stale), the Toyroom is a combination meeting hall and laboratory. True to its name, the halls and corridors are strewn with toys and entertaining gadgets.



The first floor is mostly meeting halls for governance and public lectures. Everyone participates in this government-by-consensus. Of course, deliberations can, therefore, go on for hours, which is just the way the Balloonians like it. The laboratories are on the third floor. Here is where pooka go for a little privacy, either to polish up their comedic routines or to develop a new gadget. The feel of the laboratories is something akin to a musical conservatory subletting out to a troupe of alchemists. The walls are soundproofed, but do not muffle the occasional explosion that rocks the third floor (which is why the designers placed the laboratories closest to the roof).

## Funhouse

Somewhat off to the side of Balloon lies a stretch of badlands surrounding a dilapidated carnival. Security is looser in this area, and many shady characters meet here to make equally shady business arrangements. In fact, the Funhouse Carnival is where most of the Unseelie pooka live or socialize. Disgraced and alienated “not fun” Seelie pooka sometimes come here to lick their wounds, but the general feeling among the realm denizens is that the Funhouse is anything but “fun”. In fact, it is very unsafe.

On rare occasions, the Balloon police conduct a sweep of the area, but it solves little, as the inhabitants fade into the background until “5-O” goes away. None of the rides work, but a few lights do (no one knows why). Overall, the lights make the place look even more gloomy. The Funhouse Carnival has all the attractions found in any traveling sideshow: a house of mirrors, freak show, animal cages, etc., but all are either vandalized or nonfunctional from long unuse. Even the signs labeling the attractions are faded and hard to read.

The unofficial ruler of the Funhouse is Josiah, leader of the “Merry Pranksters.” The Pranksters serve as Josiah’s muscle and eyes, but the main reason Josiah rules Funhouse is his uncanny ability to “get” things for the right price. Josiah and his Pranksters generally run the Funhouse through fear and intimidation. How they deal with outsiders and non-pooka who visit Funhouse is another matter. The Pranksters’ usual con game is to offer tickets to the “special show” for a “discount.” Selecting a newcomer who may not be missed, they extol the amazing rarity and wonder of the performance: “Why, some have even achieved Rapture!” The Pranksters who approach the marks have the most trustworthy demeanors, and most victims are led to the show like lambs to the slaughter. If the victim is not interested, the Pranksters shrug and walk away to await another opportunity.

If the victim accepts the tickets, she is told to be at the circus tent at midnight. With Josiah acting as MC, the Pranksters all drop their guises and revel in their true forms: Thallain beasts. The Pranksters always choose victims who are outsiders or who won’t be missed. They are careful not to reveal their race even to Unseelie, as the Balloon residents are already uncomfortable about the whispered tales of evil at the Funhouse. There were several motions proposed in town meetings either to bombard the Funhouse into rubble or board it up and use it as a prison, but neither motion achieved consensus. If the people of Balloon truly knew what lives in their slum, they might not deliberate as much over their next course of action.









# CHAPTER FIVE: HEARTH AND HIGHWAY

Trods and freeholds partake of the same truths, only in different keys. One is rooted in one place, growing inward and deepward but never straying from its nature. The other wanders without rest, constantly negotiating between the rooted places, providing the space-that-is-not-a-place between. As we shall see, the laws that apply to the one apply to the other, only transposed to reflect this fundamental distinction.

## The Lore of Enchanted Places: Freeholds

As I grow older, I become increasingly aware of how boring these lectures can be. You're the young ladies and lords of the realm, all abuzz and a-blinderling with the self-satisfaction and confidence that come with the right of dominion over your holds. You're already more than half in love with your realms—or should be—and you're eagerly spending all your free time getting to know the ins and outs of what freeholds are and what they do and don't.

You don't need me to give you an introduction to holdcraft. I'm just Professor Hummus, T.E. (Hard Knox, '51), and, for whatever reason, your suzerains have thrown this book at you and expect you to read it. For all I know, they "politely requested" that you take notes; maybe they'll be giving you a quiz later to see how well you paid attention. I'm sorry, kids. Just smile, nod and think of Arcadia, and you'll live through this.

This is a Young Freeholder's Guide to the Secret Life of Enchanted Places, not to mention the Care and Feeding thereof. Herein, you will find all the basic truths about the depths of the Freeholder Way that you'll need to keep your holds lit and healthy, along with assorted holdmaker's hints and cocktail party anecdotes.

Read this, and then forget it.

## The Nature of Freeholds

According to popular opinion, all freeholds are pretty much the same, once you strip away all the colored birds and ribbons and creative use of space. I'm sure you've heard that the decorations are just incidentals, peripheral to the real function of all freeholds: the storage and production of ambient Glamour, right? Most of us are in such a hurry to get that Glamour that we barely even notice the dancing shadows and the twiddlebug towns that flourish in the wrinkles of our holds. We nod appreciatively at the details in the Dreaming, but never seem to have time to look at them. The world outside the hold makes us tired and hungry for Glamour, makes us feel like there's not even enough time to savor it before we breathe it in.

I'm sure we've all been in that position, but the first law of holdcraft is that this is the wrong way to handle a freehold. Once again, popular opinion has got it backwards—granted, a freehold with no indoor rose gardens or rainbow frogs might theoretically still provide us with Glamour, but it definitely



wouldn't smell as sweet. Or, to put it another way, reducing a freehold to a big Glamour collection site might be just as filling, but it wouldn't taste so great anymore.

Furthermore, it wouldn't even be filling, because it wouldn't be a *living* freehold any longer. Your freehold is a freehold only so long as it has the pomp and circumstance and irrational touches. The twiddlebug towns evoke the Glamour in your freehold, rather than the other way around—killing or ignoring the twiddlebugs will make your hold sick and your Glamour run dry. In my work with the Invisible Census, I've probably been to 600 holdings in Concordia alone and exchanged notes with other T.E.'s worldwide regarding several hundred more.

That said, one freehold is not "pretty much the same" as all others, or any other. If freeholds were the same, they wouldn't be freeholds. Every one is unique. The stronger it is, the more unique it will be.

## Affinities

That said, holdcrafters and other sorcerers do find it useful to classify each freehold according to its "affinities," or the qualities that distinguish it from all others. This classification, then, tells us a great deal about the inner nature of the given hold, its true name or "heart." If your hold were a person and not a place, the map of its uniquenesses would reveal its personal nature; what we are after here is the inner truth of geography.

Knowledge of this sort is useful for communicating with the hold, forging alliances with it or simply making use of its internal magical preferences when you are weaving Arts. While there have been cases where this knowledge was used to damage or even destroy holds, I should not have to remind you that such action is among the greatest crimes you can

commit against the Dreaming. No enemy can be so loathsome to you that you should attack him through his freehold. The enchanted places remaining to the earth are fragile, and not even the most corrupt of them deserve to be unmade.

Generally, as with everything else about Faerie, the affinities that might describe an enchanted place can be

classed into the Realms of Actor, Fae, Prop, Nature, and Scene. A small or sickly freehold that has little Glamour to spare can be built out of only one or two Realms—a color, perhaps, or a material (like wood or paper or fire), or a type of plant or animal. Stronger freeholds naturally partake in deeper dimensions of uniqueness, with the strongest of them being built out of five or more affinities.

Affinities give us the shape of the Dreaming's Glamorous vision for a given enchanted place. Affinities are how the freehold "feels," what it "likes," what it surrounds itself with. Cantrips grounded in the Realms to which a place feels an affinity are easier to cast and endure much longer than "unaffiliated" magic. Furthermore, chimera created in a freehold with which they share Realm affinities tend to be healthier and less fragile than ones created elsewhere. In fact, free-wandering chimera who find a hold that feels an affinity for them often settle down permanently, which results in sometimes extensive colonies of chimerical creatures who fit the personality of the freehold.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of specific aspects of the world with which a freehold might feel an affinity. Since knowing how to

determine the affinities of an enchanted place is one of the basic skills of holdcraft, I include a list of the major categories here, with general examples.

## The Rock-n-Roll Bowling Alley

This retro 1950s-style establishment in south New Jersey does, in fact, contain eight (short) bowling lanes, but primarily is one of the main venues of wilder music on the eastern seaboard. Sooner or later, every changeling band plays the Bowling Alley, with its carpeted walls and combination soda fountain/bar, and wilders will come from as far away as the moon, Vermont or outer space to see their band of choice. Beverage connoisseurs worldwide also make pilgrimages to the Alley to taste the rare dairy blends mixed here, including the legendary Special Drink.

Bands-in-residence at the Bowling Alley include Rocktalk Jones (heir apparent to the title of Last of the Beatnik Poets), Muffin God, Callard & Bowser, Infinite Hat, the Shock-Mommies, and Watchchildren. All are cult bands, eccentric enough to stand out even in the strange underground scene of wilder music. Their music is sometimes accordion-driven, often in bizarre rhythms, and always lyrically perverse. Together, they make up the board of directors of Rock-n-Roll Bowling Alley, Inc. In secret basements under the Bowling Alley, they display a more studious side by carrying out obscure, often dangerous, sonic experiments. There are many failures (and explosions, and radiation leaks), but the occasional successes continue to push the boundaries of changeling sonic-Glamour awareness. According to urban wilder legends, passages lead beneath these basements to a submarine dock where the house bands can make emergency exits from failed experiments, anti-progressive forces, or screaming fans.

Politically, Rock-n-Roll Bowling Alley, Inc. remains explicitly neutral in all internecine changeling disputes. The directors are largely apolitical, but they tend, by temperament, toward anarchy; they will take no official stand either to help or hinder the Seelie or Unseelie courts. The only things they really care about are their research and their music.



## Actor Holds

Few surviving freeholds feel an affinity with the Actor Realm, and ones that do are artificial krofts — glades, by definition, are allergic to human beings and die quickly when settled by humans.

Generally, a kroft that partakes in Actor will be either a place where a certain type of human congregates (an apartment building where eccentrics tend to live, a college dormitory for budding mad scientists, a nightclub that attracts medievalists) or a place identified with a particular type of human activity (a coffeehouse, a theatre, a busy train station, a fashionable nightclub). Affinities of the first type are nouns; affinities of the second are verbs.

Unless you have made a study of the Actor Realm, this distinction might be meaningless. However, it might help to think of Actor holds of the first type as encouraging Glamour relating to the specific roles that humans play and to specific humans who play those roles — in other words, all the dress-up and uniforms that fuel so much Actor magic. Actor holds of the second type encourage Glamour relating to specific human activities — dancing, drinking coffee, drama, traveling.

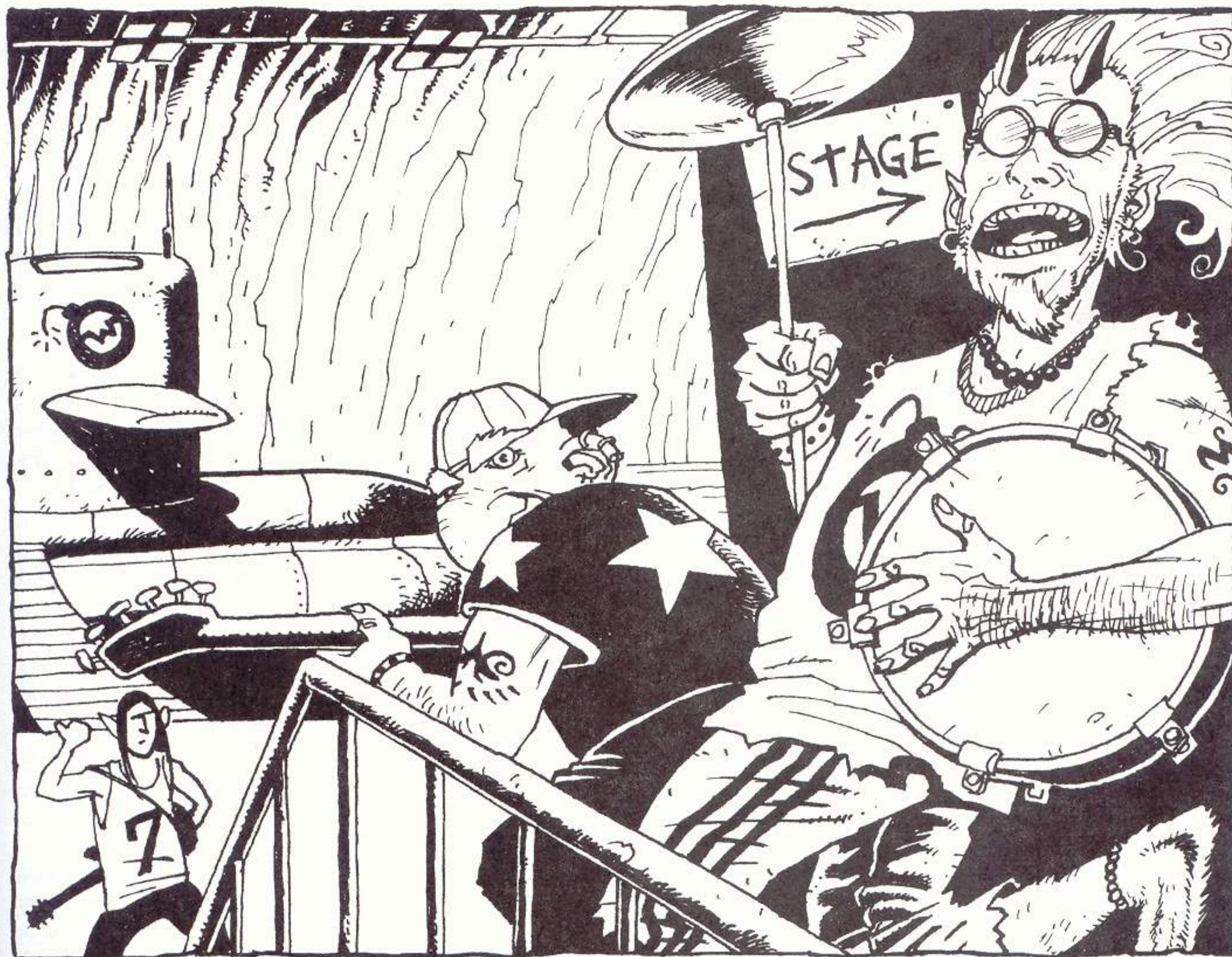
Both varieties of Actor holds express themselves by promot-

ing “suitable” behaviors and activity in the humans who inhabit them or are merely passing through them. This influence spurs a truth that the poor blind humans have forgotten: Where you live affects how you act. Even places of the dimmest Glamour can encourage different moods and even different attitudes.

## Fae Holds

Any enchanted place can feel an affinity for an aspect of the Fae Realm, and the majority of healthy holds are at least superficially affiliated with Fae. The intensity of this affinity is one of the best ways of determining how deeply rooted in the Dreaming the hold is: Holds with little or no affinity for Fae tend to be superficially connected to the Near Dreaming, while ones with strong Fae affinities are firmly imbedded in the Far or even Deep regions. Those dim holds that have eschewed (or lost) their Fae affinities are often completely severed from even the Near Dreaming, living their geographic lives in isolation.

The specific form that each Fae affinity takes varies widely. Weak affinities tend to express themselves by encouraging a particular kith, seeming or chimerical species to live nearby and indulge its own characteristic tendencies to the fullest — thus, a Fae hold might feel a special bond with slough or grumps and make itself as ideal a home for them as possible. Changelings who come





## Parrot Island

Located off the South Carolina coast, this uncharted islet is one of the fragments of the lost Empire of the Egg, allegedly the shape taken by the Dreaming during the caesura between the Reptile Kingdom and the present age. It was the time of birds, and its world lingers in such places as Parrot Island, the Seychelles, the home island of the Tengu of Japan, and some of the smaller islets of New Zealand.

Parrot Island is populated exclusively by chimerical birds of all species, of which a significant minority is sentient. There are no permanent mammalian inhabitants, although there is a bit of commerce with a few Creole changeling families in the nearby islands. While they prefer to remain aloof from the affairs of Faerie-in-Earth, the birds of Parrot Island do have the right to send emissaries to the councils of the Emperor as observers. In return, they grudgingly open their island to changelings who wish to learn bird magic from them (and who will pay the high price that the birds charge for their tutelage).

Some famous changelings have managed to befriend the secretive people of the island. These people have, from time to time, made cryptic comments about the place of the birds within Faerie and their coming role in its future. Recent visitors to the island have seen signs that the birds are preparing for a great war, but questions on this matter are met with angry silence.

The government of Parrot Island structurally resembles that of the changelings, with a local ruler (King Archulette) delegating power to a council of nobles (collectively, the Parliament of Birds) and paying tribute to the global ruler (Emperor Simurgh). Culturally, the birds are a sublime, very mannered, contemplative people. They do not seem happy to be trapped on the Earth and do not seem to be thriving. They would rather fly away.

to a hold that feels an affinity for them will feel energized by it; given the choice, they gladly stay there for as long as possible. Conversely, Fae holds that do not feel an affinity for particular changelings will feel uncomfortable to them in some way, and such visitors will generally not tarry long.

Stronger fae holds express themselves by encouraging some abstract aspect of the Dreaming, such as a color, an emotion, a moral stance (honor or perversion, for example), an artistic medium, or some other deep truth. These abstractions encourage related behavior in all fae who visit or dwell in such holds, but do not discriminate according to any of the cruder faerie distinctions, such as kith or House. Some sorcerers claim that the strongest of all the fae holds are keyed to Arcadia itself, but this notion is conjectural at best.

## Nature Holds

After fae, Nature affinities are the commonest; most of the more common elements of "freehold decoration," such as clear ponds, indoor trees, and tame birds and beasts, are affinities with Nature. Like other freeholds, Nature holds can incorporate chimerical elements which would be considered absurd or impossible in mundane places: chimerical lions in the Kingdom of Ice, green buttercups and other plants not found in the mundane world, and "natural miracles" including inextinguishable fire or furniture made from solid masses of cloud. Generally, the stronger the Glamour of a Nature hold, the more impossible its ecology can become.

## Prop Holds

Also common are Prop affinities, which tend to apply to the cluttered freeholds of collectors, misers, mad inventors, and other accumulators of both treasure and junk. Needless to say, glades never feel an affinity to Prop, as the very artificiality of Prop is antithetical to the enchanted natural world.

Prop holds express themselves by accumulating whatever aspect of the Prop Realm interests them. The exact criteria for this accumulation vary widely from Prop hold to Prop hold, with some tending toward quantity (and becoming vast heaps of dolls or antiques or books or shoes) and others tending toward idiosyncratic arrangements or reconfigurations of the accumulated props. A typical Prop hold subtly modifies props that spend extended lengths of time within its boundaries to better fit its specific affinity.

For example, a hold with an affinity for knives gradually causes chimerical shoes and other voile to wear down, giving them knife-sharp edges. On the other hand, anyone who visits a hold with an affinity for red ribbon gradually discovers that all of their chimerical weapons and talismans have been decorated with brightly woven ribbons.

## Scene

With Fae, Scene is the most important realm for classifying the unique role a freehold plays within the greater Dreaming. "Freehold," after all, is the class of enchanted (Fae) places (Scene) — insofar as a hold is enchanted, it possesses affinities with Fae. Insofar as a hold is a place, it possesses affinities with Scene.

The so-called "place-bending" characteristics of Scene freeholds that so confuse humans and fledglings are manifestations of Scene affinity. In the mundane world, a freehold may be of any size, but most are quite small and unobtrusive. However, freeholds that have particularly strong affinity with the truths of place are immune to the rules of mundane architecture and volume. I am sure you are familiar with the old credo that "the deeper you go" into a freehold "the bigger it gets" and that "the inside is bigger than the outside." Both are aspects of the Scene affinity at work.

## Guards and Wards

Now that we are all acquainted with the fundamental affinities of holdcraft, it might be time to say a few words about the way they are most commonly used by holdkeepers: as guardians and monitors to ensure the sanctity of the hold itself.



## The Solitary Ringing Tree

When driving or walking across the dry expanse near the border between Colorado and Nebraska, it is possible to catch sight of a single softwood tree of unidentified species in full leaf, at the edge of the flat and grassy plain. There are no other trees anywhere in sight. Then, a passing breeze blows through the branches, and there is a sound like ocean breakers and the music of thousands of tinkling bells. This is the Solitary Ringing Tree.

Over the decades since the Tree was planted in the Reverse Sycamore Walking across the Great Plains, travelers have adorned every one of the Tree's branches with thousands, perhaps millions, of small bells. The origin of this custom is lost now, but it has become a deeply loved tradition in the Grass Kingdom to hang a bell or two when a journey allows. Some believe that decorating the Tree with a bell brings good luck. Others just think it looks pretty to see the flat country punctuated by a single tree, its every bough glimmering as light strikes the bells.

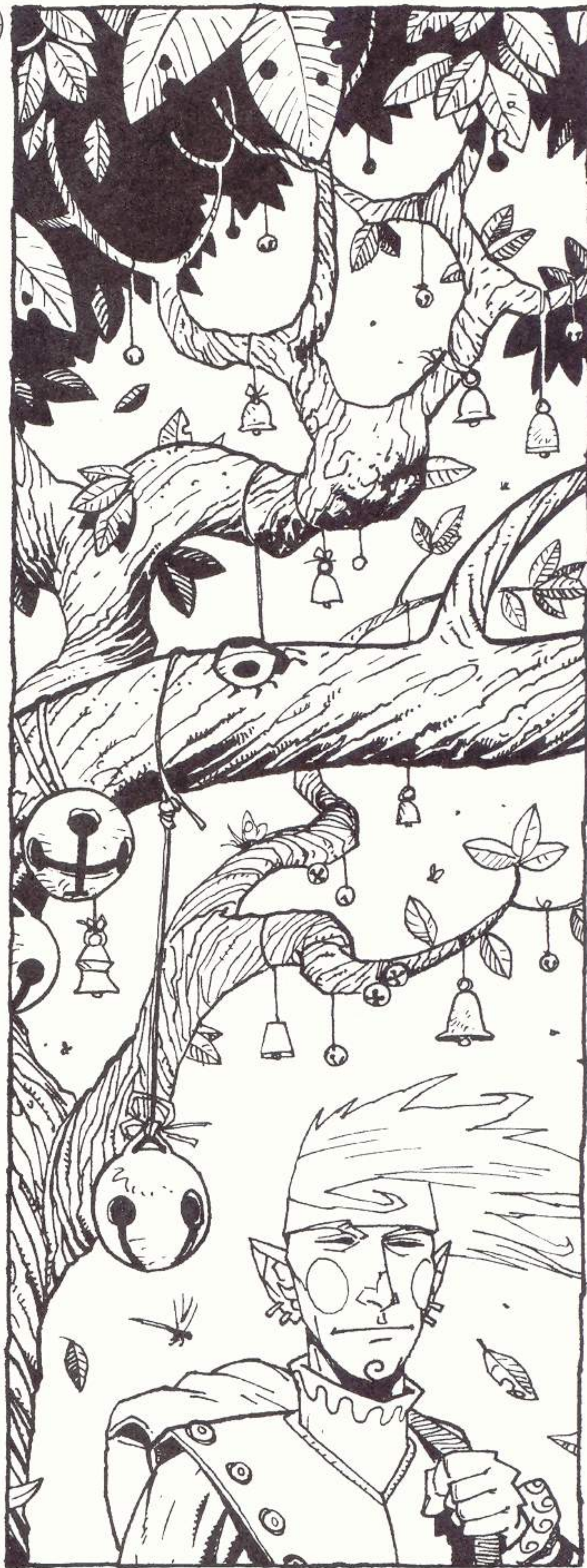
Because the Tree is so universally loved by plains faeries, it has become a traditional safe haven for fugitives from injustice. The idea of violence in the vicinity of the Tree is repugnant to the locals, who have woven many Bans of peace and weapons-bindings there to ensure the site's innocence is preserved. A number of the great treaties between the Grass Kingdom and the Burning Sun were signed here.

Many of the tinkling bells hung here have magical properties, and any of them can be melted down to release Glamour that has seeped into them over the years from the Tree. While there are procedures for harvesting the Tree with its permission, stealing bells will lower a Ban on the thief. An hour or so after any such theft, all fabrics finer than cotton will cause the thief to itch. This Ban continues until the bells are returned to the Tree.

During certain seasons, the aspen-like bark of the Tree itself can be peeled away in small amounts for use as an ingredient in certain healing teas. Taking the bark at the proper season does not harm the Tree; however, taking the bark at other seasons not only hurts the Tree but is also quite difficult, and it tends to produce poisonous brews.

Some, who are wise in the Green Way of plants, are convinced that the Ringing Tree is ready to propagate its seeds.

The ease of spinning cantrips out of those aspects of Faerie with which a hold has an affinity means that most of the guards and wards of established freeholds partake in the local affinities. A hold with an affinity for fish takes various types of aquatic chimera, which could mean anything from mermaids to sea monkeys to giant, intelligent carp as its defenders. A hold with an affinity for small, claustrophobic spaces defends itself with labyrinthine tun-





## The Outside Inn

This building is one of the hearts of Faerie-in-Manhattan and dates from the glory days of that realm. From outside, it appears to be just another Upper East Side residential building that has seen better days. Once you enter the art deco glass and bronze doors, you find yourself in a nondescript room containing the building doorman's desk, which is staffed day and night by liveried trolls. Most riffraff never make it beyond this point.

Past the doorman's desk, a short hallway leads into the heart of the building, which is completely given over to empty space. Powerful Glamour has bent local volumes to reverse inside and outside, so the building's interior is actually an open glade surrounded by New York storefronts and floored in rolling grass and wildflowers. The ceiling, seven stories overhead, appears to be open sky, reflecting regional weather patterns and the time of day. At night, the ceiling is dark, with passing clouds, stars, and moon. During the day, it appears in varying shades of blue and gray, with occasional rain or snowfall within the building. For all practical purposes, the ceiling-sky is a real sky, and strange birds occasionally fly down into the building to nest.

The façades lining the outskirts of the building interior are of Manhattan buildings with importance to Faerie. They are arranged in seemingly random order, the Chrysler Building standing beside the Cloisters, next to the Guggenheim, next to the Strand Bookstore, and so on. Due to the overall volume-inversion covering the building, these façades are spatial equivalents of the real landmarks, and curious changelings can spy through the windows into the buildings themselves. Supposedly, there once existed a mechanism to allow people to step directly from the Outside Inn into these other parts of Manhattan, but the various doors are now stapled shut and do not allow transit.

The internal glade is larger than the Outside Inn's exterior might suggest, perhaps a city block square. It includes some light oak and sumac groves and a duck pond that doubles as a skating rink in winter. There are also several pavilions elevated with stilts and scattered throughout the glade. They occupy varying altitudes and are reachable via glass elevators. Here is where Faerie-in-Manhattan holds its outdoor revels and garden parties when the parkside courts are considered too public or too informal.

The Outside Inn is owned by an aging grump who prefers to keep out of the day-to-day affairs of changeling society. She was allegedly at school with Queen Mab when both were wilders, and the two are supposed to be extremely old friends.

nels and hidden entrances. On the other hand, a Fae hold typically resorts to riddles and magical bans to enforce its sanctity, and so forth.

Most of you have inherited an established freehold, with its own affinities already ingrained in its structure. As such, you should already have access to at least the raw materials for all the guards and wards you require — you need only look into the corners of your holding to see what is already available, then press it into service. If there are chimerical beasts, train them to act as your guardians (or hire them, if they are intelligent; in any case, befriending the aboriginal chimerical population is always a good idea). If there are chimerical plants, coax them to grow in thickets and snares, or simply harvest them for their defensive magical properties. If there are disembodied voices who speak in riddles, enlist them to your cause. Convince them to watch for intruders, make them challenge strangers.

The most important rule here, as always, is to work with what your freehold provides, never against it. In time, your holding's affinities will shift to better suit your own unique affiliations within the Dreaming (or, rather, you will shift toward them), but, for now, use what the Dreaming gives you.

For those of you who are birthing freeholds out of your own Glamour and need, the issue is almost too simple. Your new hold's affinities are largely of your own design, so choose them wisely. If you are building a dream-fortress, choose affinities for strength, to better raise mighty guards and wards. If you are building for comfort or beauty, choose otherwise — or else combine any or all of these functions in the same freehold.

## The Secret Life of Freeholds

After affinities, the most important secret of the enchanted places to keep in mind is this: Your freehold may not breathe, but it, like every other aspect of the Dreaming, is alive. It might not think in the way that we do, but it feels. Freeholds have minds and memories. They have geographic hearts.

### Attunements

It is not for nothing that we say "the liege and the land are one." It is a deep truth of the Dreaming that, once one of our kind claims an enchanted place (through attunement, the right of discovery or some other work of holdcraft), the place and the person grow increasingly similar. Not only does the temperament of the liege cause the freehold to reconfigure itself to match, but the affinities of the freehold have a complementary effect on the persona of the liege.

The two grow to act and think as a unit, almost as though they were bound by the Oath of Truehearts. In a way, the Oath of Truehearts and Investment (by which a changeling becomes attuned to a freehold) are quite similar in effect. Both create reciprocal magical bonds between the object of the oath and the one who swears it. You are all familiar with the ballads of freeholds falling in love with their lieges and cloaking themselves in affinity-granted human forms in order to press their suits; such tales are not idle gossip. There is a strongly romantic element to the relationship between liege and land.



This relationship manifests differently for every freehold and every holdkeeper. The more common effects range from the freehold teaching its liege its affinities in the form of Glamour Realms, to the liege actually merging physically into the substance of the freehold and reappearing only when necessary.

### Bedlam Holds and the Lost Ones

The ceremonies by which the Lost Ones wove their holds around themselves like blankets of Bedlam still exist and can be used in extremity. Since the Resurgence, the most famous use of the greater attunement is probably the withdrawal of the Kingdom of the Mountains during the Accordance War, in which Queen Columbina pulled the entire faerie fabric of her kingdom away from the Earth in disgust.

In less epic circumstances, the decision to perform the greater attunement of the Lost Ones tends to be motivated by desire to consummate the romantic bond between hold and holdkeeper. The holdkeeper is subsumed into the body of the freehold, never to return as an independent entity; in exchange, she gains vastly deepened understanding of all aspects of the freehold and its surrounding territory, and control over them, as well.

Significantly, this ceremony appears to derive from similar rites passed down by the nymphs. The oldest among us say that these rites were used by the spirits who became nymphs to bind themselves to their heart-trees and gain respite from Banality at the cost of their mobility. Likewise, the greater attunement imprisons the changeling in her freehold, which she may never leave again, but the binding also grants her additional powers and wisdom.

## The Lore of the Road: Trods

You wanted to learn how to make a little traveling music? Let's learn by doing, then. Keep up if you can.

### The Nature of Trods

Here's the difference between trods and territories. Territories have names, addresses and permanent allegiances; trods are vagabonds who are never around when you want them and never where you expect them to be. Oh, I've seen the so-called "transformation holds" that the stay-at-homes claim constantly shift shape and nature, but even these anomalies tend to stay in one place.

Trods are always on the move. That's the dream-meaning of the Road that lies in the middle of the Realm of Scene, halfway between the little places and the big ones. The Road is always in motion — between the little and the big, between

the specific and the general, between the familiar and the strange.

You'll always be surprised by the open road. Otherwise, you're just walking, not really Wayfaring. Sound like a paradox? Good.

### The Wayfarer's Escheat

#### Stay on the Path

There are only two directions on the road: ahead and behind. You came from behind, you're going ahead. Anything else is a distraction that might take you off the road entirely, at which point you are lost in all senses of the word. When you're lost, you're entirely at the mercy of chance, which is not the best gamble.

#### Never Retrace Your Steps

You're on a journey. Go forward. Don't waste your time looking over your shoulder or trying to change your mind. If you come to a place you don't like, never try to erase the intervening travel by turning around and going backward. "Backward" isn't there any more. Keep moving.

#### Journeys are Different from Trips

You're walking the trod for a reason; otherwise, you're just a tourist. Walking with a reason on a trod is a journey, and that means everything around you is going to follow the laws of stories, not the laws of the mundane world. Every detail matters. Everyone and everything you meet on the road is absolutely important to the story. You have a choice: Either you're going to learn something from them, or they're going to teach you something.

#### Journeys have Shapes

Don't shy away from adventure. Adventure is the price you pay for traveling. If not for the strange (sometimes dangerous) people and situations you meet along the way, you'd be better off staying home. You're on the road to get to somewhere new, aren't you? How can you tell if you're somewhere new if everything is familiar and safe?

#### Remember your Destination

Try to keep focus. Don't let the other trodwalkers teach you any lessons about the dangers of distraction or imperfect purpose. Stick to the Path; that's why it's there. Don't change your mind and decide to go somewhere else when you're halfway there. Get to where you're going first — then, if you still want to go to the third place, start a new journey.

#### Time Disappears on the Road

Take your time. Don't rush — when you rush, you lose sight not only of where you are, but also of where you are going. You lose the path when you rush. Remember that time spent on the road is a duration outside of normal time. When you're in the dream of traveling, nothing in the fixed territories matters.

Remember this: We can slow down now and then to smell the dream-roses. We've made good enough time so far.

### Trod Mastery

If you're a trodfarer, you're not only allowed to be crafty, it's almost a professional obligation. People expect you to show up where and when you're not expected. Your reputation



depends on how consistently you can surprise your friends and enemies. With that in mind, start experimenting with all the ways you can play with trods, if you haven't already. As examples:

## Scrying Destinations

The shape of the road tells you something about the shape

of where it leads. Trods share in the realm affinities of the territories at their end and their beginning — in fact, you could say that a trod is simply the process by which the affinities of the beginning place are transmuted into the affinities of the destination through dream-logic. However, the important thing to remember here is that the affinities of the destination territory are always visible (if hidden) in the very first steps of the trod that leads there.

Yes, this means that, with work and perception, you can determine the sort of place a trod will take you to, before you actually start down it. This ability is very handy when wandering down unfamiliar roads — taking the wrong fork could lead you to an ogre nest or the lair of some marrow eaters. Know what you are getting into before you start down any path!

## Subverting Locks

There is nothing more unnatural than a locked door. Doors, by their very existence, imply passage, free travel and no questions asked. Otherwise, they'd be walls, now, wouldn't they? Unfortunately, the Dreaming (excluding Arcadia) is an imperfect place, and there are individuals who would lock various trods against you for their own selfish reasons. I'm sure you've met the guardian beasts that freehold "owners" have sent out onto the trods to patrol and keep undesirable types from making a mess. You've done the riddle contests, played the chess games with empty suits of armor, and figured out the passwords, and hedge mazes and all that other stuff. Maybe you've picked fights with the chimerical creatures, or maybe you've distracted them in some other way while you slipped past.

The most important thing to remember is a very simple truth: The guardians are all part of the Dreaming, which means they can belong to you as easily as they now belong to whoever dropped them on the road to begin with. If you can find a way to communicate with them, not as an adversary but as a sympathetic listener and possible friend, you may be able to win them over to your side of things. Once that's accomplished, it's easy for you to slip by them without going through all the time-consuming password checks and challenges.

Or, if you make an especially close friend of the guardian, you can then ask it to watch the road for you, even to keep your enemies from following you. It's okay when we drop guards and wards on the roads — it's usually to discourage or confuse pursuit, not to guard our pitiful little freeholder treasures.

How do you make friends with guardians? Dumb creatures always like food, and smarter ones (particularly the more intensely fae) tend to feel the same way about sugar. If there is any chance that the guardian can understand you, make an effort to be kind to it. Ask it how it is feeling. Compliment it on whatever you think it might feel proud of. Above all, understand that it is not your enemy, only a chimerical freehold dweller doing a job. Your enemy (if any) is the person who is trying to block your progress by dropping this poor thing or beast or person on the road.

Also, be aware that many guardians serve out of love. Most of these creatures are affiliated with decent, honorable freeholders who just happen to have enemies (which may or may not include you personally). Not only is it difficult to subvert

## Turtle Rock

Pilgrims to the city of Santa Fe often visit this supernatural feature at the urging of the locals, none of whom seems willing to tell how to get there. In fact, when pressed, many New Mexican changelings say they do not actually know how to find Turtle Rock. Whether they are lying is one of the city's secrets.

If you reach Turtle Rock in the piñon highlands northwest of the city, you find an enormous sandstone knob set at the top of a dusty hill, with a dirt road that winds past (and eventually reaches the faerie stronghold of "Little" Las Vegas, New Mexico). Turtle Rock itself has weathered into the shape of a huge desert tortoise, with a sandstone shell as big as a house and an eyeless stone head (complete with cracked mouth) the size of a car.

According to faerie lore, Turtle Rock is a living place. From time to time, visitors have reported seeing gatherings of tiny sand turtles around the site; the nature of these gatherings (if real) is unknown. "Wilson" MacAchran, a New Mexican knight currently employed by Mab of the Apple Kingdom, claims that there is a special dance to Turtle Rock that can animate the sandstone and bring the huge turtle to life. He also claims that the turtle is cursed to spend most of its time asleep in mineral form, until it is given new eyes.

There are a few stories of Turtle Rock awakening on its own to greet extraordinary visitors. When such a thing happens, the turtle apparently speaks to its visitors for short periods in a basso voice like tired thunder, discussing matters of importance to the desert and to Faerie in general. According to the stories, the turtle is very wise but slightly pedantic, and conversation with it has given a number of famous changelings the key to unraveling difficult problems.

It is said that the turtle yearns to be free, but all attempts to discuss the curse with it have resulted in the turtle growing sullen and breaking off conversation to sulk. In fact, all recorded conversations with Turtle Rock, save one, have ended in this way.

Similar animate mineral formations can be found at the Baltic islet of Gaasiumaa, which is built on the stone back of a cursed faerie whale; at L'Enigmé d'Ourang-Outang in Madagascar; and elsewhere.



## The Rainstorm's Edge

This transient phenomenon occurs at the precise boundary of all rainstorms, at the point where you can stand with your hands extended before you and have raindrops falling on one hand while the other is still dry. Standing within the Rainstorm's Edge produces feelings of great exaltation and renewal in changelings, feeds Glamour and alleviates Banality. Sky magics and seemings are rejuvenated here; certain wistful wilders walk the Rainstorm's Edge continually in order to retain their youthful freshness.

In certain tales of changeling heroes, there are hints that all rainstorms are connected at their edges, so that it is possible for fae with enough knowledge of sky magic to travel from one rainstorm to any other rainstorm on earth by "skating" the edges. There are also accounts of chimerical creatures who make the terminator between rain and sun their homes, and of certain hidden glens that are accessible only from this place.

this sort of guardian, but it is valid to question why you would want to be harassing this sort of freeholder anyway. If you encounter one of these loyal, deeply devoted guardians, it might be easier simply to explain yourself and wait for clearance from the freehold itself.

On the other hand, guardians who are unlucky enough to be affiliated with self-centered, mean-spirited freeholders tend to hate their duties; such guardians are easily subverted. Many are enslaved and are just as unhappy to be stuck on a trod as you are to see them there. In these cases, you might pick up a valuable ally for the road by befriending or freeing said pitiful creature.

## SHORTCUTS

Most major trods fray slightly along their margins, resulting in a chaotic system of subpaths and meandering trails that loop around and connect back to the main trodway at other points. Learn how to recognize these trails and use them tactically to evade pursuit or slip around impassable blocks. Be careful, though — most of these trails are (if briefly) not on the Silver Path, and should be explored only with great care (or desperation). Some have been known to fade out, becoming dead ends in the trackless Deep Dreaming. Others connect back up to completely different trods, enabling either impressive escapes or ominous wandering about, lost in the Dream.

## Trailblazing

With true trod mastery, it is possible to carve new associational paths through the Dreaming. Such expertise requires great sacrifices and questing, though, and is very dangerous. If you need to know how to make new trods, odds are you are in trouble

anyway, so I'm not going to make your trouble worse — besides, there's really no rigid method. You simply tie yourself to something stable (like a freehold), step onto a trod and then step off the path into the Dreaming itself. Then defeat all obstacles until you get where you're going. Easy, right?

## Trailrazing

Likewise, by attacking the Silver Path itself, it is possible to snap a trod and render it dead, useless for safe travel. The trod then proceeds, gradually, to atrophy from the breakage point, rotting away as it reverts to primeval Dreamstuff.

Needless to say, I don't look too kindly on this sort of thing. If you ever do it, you'd better have a damn good reason. The last time it was done with any seriousness was during the Reverse Sycamore Walking, when we westerlings erased the nunnehi "sideways trods" five hundred years ago. It's not something I'm proud of.

## Life on the Crossroad

Some people live on the trods, you know. Not to say that everyone on the road is like the settled territory dwellers, living in their houses and staying in one place. We're still vagabonds; besides, it wouldn't exactly be the road then — it'd be tame territory!

Instead, some among us spend our vagabond lives wandering up one trod and down another, like childlings tracing the corners of a pane of stained glass. Most of these wanderers, oddly enough, are we Eshu. This is our true home, here in the changeable landscape under the changeable sky. We were born to take the messages from one road to another, to look in all directions with the same enthusiasm, to own only what we love enough to carry on our backs.

Of course, we have our markets and trodsides inns, open to any wanderer, no matter where they come from or who they are. There's a hospitality on the road that, to some extent, has been lost in the tame territories. We do have our cads and bandits, but they're easy enough to avoid, when you truly know the road, and they're rarely wicked enough to abuse their fellow vagabonds. Most of their crimes are committed against hapless freeholder tourists, who tend to deserve what they get.

## The Arcadian Roads

There are few absolute statements that are always true in the Dreaming. One of the most absolute of them is this: If it's still possible to reach Arcadia, no one remembers how. The oldest among us remember where the Arcadian roads once lay, but they are either sealed in various impenetrable ways or else simply no longer exist. We are truly exiled.

Still, we are nothing if not a curious people, and we have made our own studies of the locks and seals barring our way back down the Arcadian trods. The most common of them is probably the one called the "Arcadian Knot," where the Silver Path curves back in on itself to form a region of increasingly



## Orfeo's Path

A feat of portable trodwork, Orfeo's Path can be called into being anywhere by any changeling who has learned the proper techniques. Essentially, the would-be trodwalker scatters eggshells on the ground before her and begins walking, taking care not to step down too hard and crush the fragile shells. This procedure requires a certain degree of concentration and dexterity; however, once the trail has been forged in this way, the trodwalker's companions may follow without fear of breaking the shells (or the magic). For arcane dream-logic reasons, the trail of shells partakes in the nature of the Silver Path, and whoever walks it need not fear unprovoked attack by nightmares.

On the other hand, if the trodwalker herself breaks the eggshells underfoot, the trod comes to a dead end. The Dreaming seems to ensure that this failure strands the trodwalker in some dangerous situation (lost in a snowstorm, poised on the edge of a sheer cliff, menaced by cannibal monsters), but the Path can again be called back into existence, once the immediate danger is dealt with.

elaborate knotwork. The Cat in the Cradle tells me that the Knot is the same pattern as both the Seal of Arcadia and the Labyrinth of Irrgarten, but the information, while fascinating, isn't terribly useful. The crucial thing about the Knot is that it tangles any and all trods that lead into it, thus confusing anyone who tries to walk the trods into the Knot and leading the traveler to unexpected destinations.

Most of the Arcadian roads sealed by the Knot are fresher ones that saw the most casual traffic, even in the pre-Shattering days. The older, crumblier trods often still have their original guardian beasts barring the way, just as they did when such trods actually led somewhere. Now, though, the guardians never respond to any of the old trials or riddle-tests or even violence — where once they waited for wayfarers to perform the correct procedure or give the right response, they now ignore us completely. They are blind and deaf to everything we do, as if they had been turned to stone.

The annoying thing is that they bar trod passage just as effectively, now that they're immobile. There's no getting around them without losing the Path, which means disaster, or at least distraction, in the farward wilds of the Dreaming. Some of my comrades have reported other variations on the Arcadian seal, including such things as riddle-locks with no answer, uncrossable chasms and the rather standard walls of impassable substance (eternal fire, poisoned thorns, raven's teeth). For me, though, the saddest of all the reminders that Arcadia is gone is all the empty spaces in the Dreaming through which the roads

that vanished used to run. When the Arcadian trods withdrew from the Dreaming, they left vacant holes in the world. If you look, you can still see the holes.

## The Silver Road

The Silver Road, the only one of Arcadia's Royal Roads to survive the Sundering, bent and reconfigured with the estrangement of the worlds. It is now peculiar, even among trods, because where it formerly led to Arcadia, it no longer leads anywhere; it only twists and loops around all the other faerie roads. Does this mean that the Silver now leads nowhere, or everywhere? To my knowledge, nobody has succeeded in walking the Silver itself since the Resurgence; instead, we watch the Silver while we're walking our own road and use the former not as a road but as a road sign. Perhaps there's a clue in that.

Anyway, the Silver points the way to wherever you're going. When you see it woven into the trod you're on, that means you're on the right track. The presence of the Silver — whether in the form of an actual silver-brick road, or of silver ribbons woven into the roadside trees or a pillar of silver cloud — indicates that your journey will follow all the rules of Dán and the Story. It will be Glamourously fulfilling, magically right. The Silver indicates that the pointless, the boring and the gratuitously hurtful will be kept outside the shape of your journey. Perhaps it actively keeps them away; perhaps it only serves as a token and a sign. We've lost so much of the old trodlоре.

Of course, bad things can still happen to you within sight of the Silver Path, but they'll be of your own fault and making. The Silver only enforces the logic of Story along its length, it doesn't make everything on it perfectly utopian. If it did, it would still lead to Arcadia, wouldn't it? No, you can still get hurt on the Path, but you can at least relax a bit, with the

## The San Buenaventura

The great lost dream-river of western Concordia, the San Buenaventura, was destroyed at the beginning of the Accordance War, when Dafyll marched against the rebellious commoner peoples of Pacifica. In former times, it was the best and quickest path across the desert wastes that lie between the Grass Kingdom and Pacifica, and it allowed easy trade and travel between the realms. The San Buenaventura was a legend even among changelings for its deep, sea-blue waters, which had the ability to undo the ill effects of curses and other hurtful magic. In days past, the dream-river could be followed either downstream, across the Wastes, or upstream, to Arcadia.

The San Buenaventura withdrew from the Earth when Dafyll, out of spite, cursed it shortly after the retreat of the Rocky Mountain Columbine Kingdom. Now that it is gone, the wastes have grown larger and stranger, not to mention more dangerous.



knowledge that anything truly threatening to you will be, at least in some part, your own fault. These monsters will have to wait for a show of weak resolve or secret guilt from you before they can hurt you. The traps will wait courteously for you to trigger them before slowing or stopping your progress between Here and There.

Off the Silver, of course, nothing is obliged to make sense. The world gets very deep into the Dream very quickly, with common sense melting like sugar in the rain. The solid shape of things breaks loose and becomes wild out there, and anything can happen at any time. The deepest of the deepingward realms are all like this, in their own ways — the Milderwood, the stark fastnesses of Chakravada, and especially the tidal ebb and swell of the Sea of Dreams itself. Without the obvious presence of the Silver, the older, stranger laws of the world keep their old preeminence. This is part of the reason the fomorians are so dangerous: Their fate is not ours, and their story does not play by our rules.

## The Murphy Tunnels

Recently, a boggan in Baltimore discovered a trapdoor set in the floor of her Murphy bed closet. The door appeared to be locked from the other side, but she managed to pry the door open and explore a small portion of the apparently limitless system of ducts and crawlspaces behind it. When she found another door and emerged in another Murphy closet in a building a few blocks away, she became understandably disturbed. Since then, similar trapdoors have been found in Murphy closets in major cities across North America, with underground tunnels running even between cities.

Highly placed nockers within the Murphy company have been slow in answering correspondence asking about these doors and the tunnels beyond. They have, however, categorically refused to make the Murphy bed specifications public, and the patents have “mysteriously” disappeared from the U.S. archives. The nature and purpose of these tunnels remains unknown.







# CHAPTER SIX: DANGERS OF THE DREAMING

## Creatures of Dream

This chapter explores the nature of Dreamstuff. For Storytellers, there is a chimerical bestiary for instant antagonists, as well as a guide for creating realms with believable physical feel to them. Even Dream Realms spawned by insane minds or Nightmare Realms have their own logic. This chapter provides a schematic for considering the physical properties of the fantastic.

For players, this chapter is a guide for collecting Dreamstuff: where you might find it, how to collect it, and its various uses, as well as some of its possible dangers for the unwary. Nothing in the Dreaming is "set in stone," however, and Storytellers should feel free to change the following guidelines any way they see fit.

## Dreamstuff

Dreamstuff is the basic element of all chimera. It is tangible and impinges on all senses, yet is difficult to describe; this substance is the building material for everything found in the Dreaming.

No one really knows how Dreamstuff originated; some seers in the Crystal Circle speculate that it came about when the first mages became Aware, while many mages suggest that the Dreaming is a mere offshoot of an area they call the Umbra. Suffice it to say that the 'stuff is out there, and in the right hands can be used to Craft or Forge sentient and nonsentient chimera and chimerical objects.

## Incidental and Dreamed

Incidental Dreamstuff comprises the bulk of objects, resources and creatures in the Dreaming. Refined out of the

realm's indigenous chimerical materials, this 'stuff appears as a fine, sparkling, multicolored mist, similar to the iridescence on a butterfly's wing. Free-floating incidental 'stuff, sometimes called sleepy-dust by nockers, is so fine that mass quantities of it are airborne in some places.

Exactly how the 'dust composes chimera is a mystery. Something in the nature of dreams attracts the dust like iron filings to a magnet. These particles form and coalesce into the voile of a changeling undergoing Chrysalis, or into incidental chimera from a mortal Dreamer's unconscious desires. In mundane areas where changelings undergo Chrysalis or Bedlam, the dust moves about in an agitated state. There is a brief flash just before the dust merges into a chimera. In areas empty of Dreamers or filled with Autumn People, the dust is sluggish and sparkles less.

Items Crafted or Forged of Incidental Dreamstuff quickly wear out and easily break, as the material is unable to maintain cohesion in its new form. These items also cannot possess reds. Attempts to Forge Incidental 'stuff often end in frustration. Boggans and nockers like to use Incidental 'stuff for building project models because it is easier to find, but rarely do they make an object with a practical use from this material.

## Crafted and Forged

Dreamstuff is present as usable material in a precious few sentient and nonsentient chimera and chimerical resources. These resources and creatures always have a special or unique quality that sets them apart from other chimera. An ash tree with such Dreamstuff, good for making stout longbows, say, might be in the exact center of a forest and have a small, silvery cloud over it, raining a gentle shower onto this tree alone. A chimerical rabbit might have unusual eyes or





fur, and metal with Dreamstuff has an iridescent sheen. Changelings can detect Dreamstuff in chimera by careful observation (Perception + Kenning, difficulty 4: see **Appendix**).

Recognizing the 'stuff in materials is only a first step. Receptacles of this powerful material are seldom unattended. Although other chimera cannot actually see it, they do sense the potential power of the material and are compelled to guard it against any interlopers. Over time, the guardians themselves become receptacles, as residue of the 'stuff sifts into their systems. This 'stuff increases the potency of Glamour within the guardian, making him stronger or imbuing him with unusual reds. This phenomenon is the reason guardians of Dreamstuff are often more powerful than typical members of their race. The body-parts of guardians are also good resources for Dreamstuff.

Once any guardians are defeated, the Dreamstuff is ready to harvest. Before harvesting, a changeling must understand certain rules of thumb about the properties of Dreamstuff materials: Sympathy materials are ones that possess abilities similar to the desired function of the finished, Forged chimera. The hide of a giant chameleon, for example, is similar in function to a cloak Crafted with the Hide rede, and would serve well as one of the materials for such a cloak. Sympathetic materials have an intuitive connection to their desired Crafting. The Japanese fae hero Susano-o, for example, obtained some material for a sword from the tail of a dragon that he slew. He Forged the sword to be quick and dexterous; and in combat, the sword, indeed, moved like a dragon's thrashing tail. Dragons are also well-armored, and he could also have used the scales as material in Crafting armor.

The rule of Sympathy is intuitive, not rational. For instance, a nocker wishing to create a mechanical gate-watcher might use the eyes from a chimerical owl as part of the guardian's eyes, rather than chimerical diamonds, as diamonds are less "watchful" (but he might also use the diamonds as the base element: see the Rule of Three, below).

## Scarcity

The harder an object is to find, the more usable Dreamstuff there is in it. The body-parts of the Questing Beast would be an incredible resource for Forging chimera, as there is only one Questing Beast, and no one has ever seen it or caught it. Conjunction, or Harvest-Time, Dreamstuff is more potent when harvested at certain times of the year. The best harvests depend upon the material and its intended use, as well as the fae doing the harvesting. A sluagh harvesting chimerical nightshade during Samhain would get far more potent Dreamstuff than if she were to harvest it on March 27th, for example. Also, the nightshade would be less potent if it were harvested by a nunnehi, as Samhain is not as important a holiday for these fae.

## The Rule of Three

Every rede stored into a Crafted or Forged chimera requires three materials: a base element and two supporting elements. The base element is the primary material from which the chimera is composed: The base element of a bow is wood (what kind of wood depends upon its Sympathy to its reds), and the base element of



a golem is usually metal, clay, or wood. Only three elements are necessary per rede, even if there are multiple types or levels of rede. A chimera with Physical and Social Attributes, for example, still needs only three Sympathetic elements, no matter how many levels of Strength or Charisma it has. If the creator also wanted her chimera to be able to fly, she would need three *more* materials for flight. Some of the elements in a chimera can satisfy more than one rede, especially if an element could be Sympathetic to more than one rede. For instance, a boggan could use a hummingbird wing as one material in both a flight rede and to purchase Dexterity, since a hummingbird is fast. However, there needs to be a separate base element for each rede; base elements cannot also be supporting elements, and vice versa.

## Methods of Collecting Materials

The ways of collecting Dreamstuff in materials resemble the ways mortals collect any resource, except that a bit more ceremony is involved. Nunnehi, for example, always forgive the spirits of animals and plants that they harvest, and they almost never Forge sentient chimera. Nockers and boggans often say a little ritual over plants or materials they collect for Forging. They believe that this act increases the potency of the Dreamstuff. This could be mere tradition, or it could be part of the reason they are so good at Crafting. Nockers and boggans

are tight-lipped about this ritual: They consider it a trade secret and get edgy if others even know about it.

This little ritual aside, anyone with an understanding of 'stuff and access to it can collect the raw material, which comes from various animals and plants, or even the ground and air. Boggans in the Dreaming are often hard at work panning the rivers for chimerical gold, as this material has many Sympathetic uses and they like to use it for jewelry-making. Silver and other precious metals can be mined in much the same manner as in the mundane world; in fact, a few realms have so much available raw material that it is easy to harvest, and mining it is not necessary.

These "motherlode" realms of Dreamstuff are much sought after, andnockers and boggans usually pay well for news of such places. Descriptions of realms with flowing rivers of gold or plains covered by giant, slow-moving, silver-plated armadillos are usually enough to get the eager attention of anynockers and boggans within earshot. These realms are not as plentiful as they used to be, and journeying to them becomes something of a full-scale quest.

Any materials that can be found in the mundane world — and lots that can't — are available in the Dreaming. Again, how available depends upon each individual realm. Some realms teem with unicorns and precious gems, while others are barely distinguishable from the surface of the moon. One material that is hard to find anywhere in the Dreaming is chimerical iron. This substance, spun from the dreams of iron, is usually found in short supply and in areas with many guardians. It is highly sought after by boggans andnockers for its tensile strength: It is the hardest chimerical metal, harder than chimerical silver (the material most commonly used for chimerical weapons).

Unfortunately, chimerical iron is associated with dreams of violence and strife, and the guardians around it tend to be the deadliest of all. Also, the effects of chimerical iron on fae are vaguely similar to its mundane counterpart: While it does not confer Banality, it does cause some discomfort in contact with Kithain flesh, and cantrips are harder to use (+1 difficulty) with chimerical iron around. Thus, there are few Forged iron breastplates. Nockers have traditionally used chimerical iron to create iron golems. These nonsentient chimera have skin harder than diamond and are notably resistant to assault by Arts. Trouble arises from the few golems who become sentient, however.

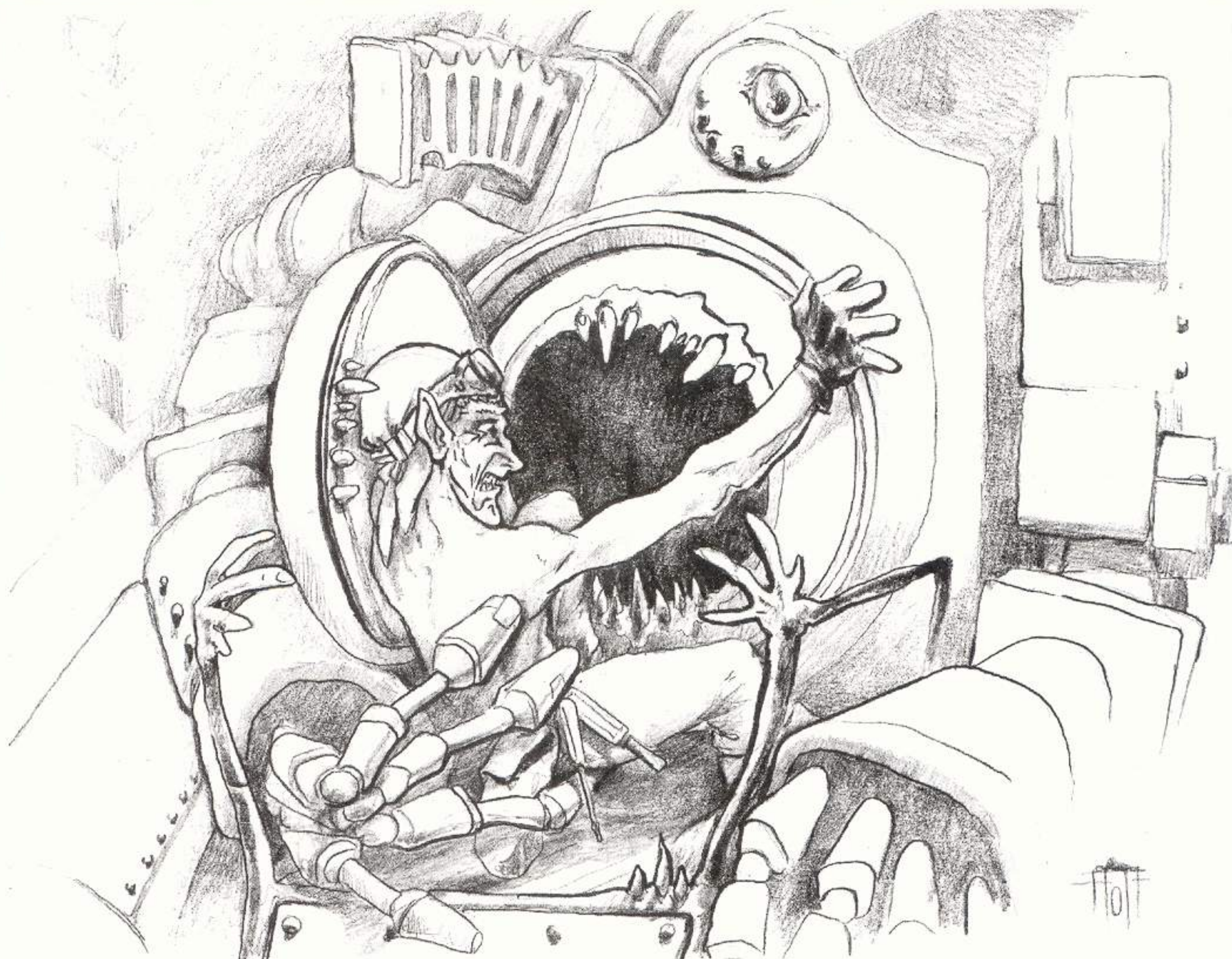
The biggest source of frustration fornockers and other kith gathering Dreamstuff in the Dreaming is a substance called Foolstuff. To all appearances, this material looks and acts like any other resource. Some tests reveal Foolstuff for what it is (Dream-Craft Level 2, 3 successes needed, with Fae 4+ Realm necessary), as can Dreaming-savvynockers (Dream-Lore + Perception, difficulty 8, 6 successes needed; a botch signifies that the nocker believes the substance to be Dreamstuff). Kithain who are taken in can use Foolstuff to make chimera with no immediate ill effects. Like a creeping, growing crack in a fine glass window, however, the chimera gradually starts to change. The changes are subtle, perhaps even benign or whimsical, at first. Perhaps armor changes its color, or a gate grows a huge nose. Over time, the changes manifest like a runaway virus in the blood: The chimera may grow to gigantic proportions and run amok, it may turn into a nervosa from

### Sentient Chimera As Raw Materials

Kithain who wish to use sentient chimera in creating Forged items still need to follow the rules of thumb above, but each part of a creature counts as a separate element. The scales, bones, teeth, eyes and claws of a dragon all count as separate, potent elements. If a nocker could either deceive or force a dragon to be Forged as a chimerical (and probably cursed) sword, she would have a powerful item on her hands.

In Crafting and Forging sentient chimera, pay particular attention to the rule of Sympathy: the abilities and body-parts of the sentient chimera should correspond to the desired abilities of the final product. Any sentient chimera forced into a Crafted or Forged form not Sympathetic to its original function is considered an Incidental chimera. Plato the Banana Slug of Terebintha freehold, for example, would not be very good as Forged chimerical Boots of Lightning Speed, as giant banana slugs are not known for their amazing fleetness. A short-sighted nocker who tried to force Plato into becoming these boots would wind up with nonfunctional footwear guaranteed to crack and peel apart as she tried to use them. If, however, the nocker Forged Plato into the Slimy Tennis Shoes of Moonwalking, that would be another matter entirely.





the maker's psyche, or it may develop a fiendish intelligence and scheme with other chimerical allies against its creator.

A changeling who follows the general rules of thumb for harvesting and is wary of Foolstuff needs to worry only about getting the Dreamstuff out of the Dreaming, unless she plans to build her chimera at a safe place within the Dreaming, such as a freehold. Many entrepreneurial fae make use of cantrips or treasures that transport large volumes of material quickly or shorten distances (such as Wayfare). Cantrips that disguise the material in transport are highly useful against thieves. Failing any of these measures, the procurer of Dreamstuff either engages the services of chimerical pack-animals or the strong backs of his own motley. Some unscrupulous Unseelie boggans do not bother with the hazardous collection of Dreamstuff from realms, but rather lie in wait with their motley alongside a Silver Path that leads to such a realm. Some Unseelie boggans offer maps, chimerical back-beasts and guides near motherlode realms, all at inflated prices. A harvester who manages to overcome the guardians and win her booty then finds a very unpleasant reception outside the realm, as the "guide" signals the motley whenever the adventurer finds anything valuable. The motley ambushes the adventurer outside the Realm and

demands the valuables in exchange for safe passage.

An adventurer who manages to get the Dreamstuff home safely still must Craft the material. A forge or workshop is the

### Volume of Dreamstuff

The Storyteller judges the amount of Dreamstuff necessary for creating chimera. Who wants to spend game-time figuring out how many ounces of chimerical silver ore they need to make a chimerical mirror? However, apply common sense: a character wanting to make an army of iron golems is not going to get enough chimerical iron from one quick jaunt to the Iron-mine Realm, no matter how potent the chimerical iron there. Also, some of the Dreamstuff may be damaged in its extraction. Suppose the characters decide they wish to kill a giant sea-turtle to use its shell in the making of a boat. In the ensuing melee, they hack the turtle to bits. Is there enough shell left to create a boat? Only the Storyteller knows for sure.



usual site for a Crafting, but it depends upon the nature of the fae's work and the type of chimera to be Forged. A chimerical castle, for instance, would probably start with a stoneworks and forge, while a creator of chimerical mirrors would utilize a glassworks and require lots of Dreamstuff from silver.

## Beasts of the Dreaming

### The Ecology of the Dream Realms

Even dragons have to eat. No matter how fantastic the realm, its denizens are bound by rules. Even in realms where gravity is nonexistent and the inhabitants regularly turn themselves inside-out like gloves, there are still physical properties that govern all inhabitants. This is true even of some Nightmare Realms, where the governing physical law may be that all physical laws change.

The Storyteller designing a Dream Realm needs to consider questions such as: What do its inhabitants eat? If the nature of the Realm is wildly different from our mundane reality, for example, how does that affect seemingly unrelated elements? In the Kingdom of the Clouds, how do the inhabitants get their drinking water? Do they have the water piped up from the surface, miles below, or do they have airships that ferry up the water? Perhaps they use furnaces that heat the clouds into liquid water, which they decant into containers? Maybe they don't need to worry about drinking water, as they have skin that can absorb water vapor. Is that the reason their skin is translucent, with their veins and arteries all visible near the surface?

A little extra thought about the physical nature of fantastic reality goes a long way to building a realm with a "solid" feel. All of the Dreaming's denizens are living creatures, even the ones who don't have a physical form.

Plants could also play a major part in a story, beyond just backdrops. While trees and bushes are mostly used for scenery and setting the mood, a truly imaginative story could revolve around plants as either protagonists or antagonists. Suppose a town of chimera lived among the branches of a gigantic golden oak. These chimera, called icaroi, formed from the human desire to fly. They look like hybrids of crows and lizards, with human heads and butterfly wings. They are (somewhat) intelligent, and speak with high, chittery, annoying voices. They are aggressive with each other and fight over favored nectar sites on the tree.

Lately, the tree's branches have animated and attack any icaroi who try to feed. Why? Could it be that the tree has "had enough and can't take it any more?" Perhaps it is because of the duplicity of the wyrmlings, the chimera underground who whisper dark, malefic rumors to the tree. Or is the tree possessed by a blight spirit? Suppose it is a combination of all of these things: How do the players resolve this situation, short of killing the tree (a cure that would be worse than the disease)?

Plant varieties are also an important, often neglected, factor in any setting. Sure, it's simple to describe different trees as tall or bushlike, coniferous or deciduous, but the finer details are impor-

tant, too. What are the differences between an oak forest and a redwood forest? Among redwoods, one feels awe at the grandeur of the trees. What kind of tree would evoke melancholy? What about humor, or frustration (the Frustrated Forest)? What are the principal shades of color one might see upon entering the Forest of Hate? Or, to turn the idea around and use color as the evoking agent: What is the primary emotion of the Crimson Wood? What lives there, and why is it crimson?

## Animals in the Dreaming

The Dreaming is populated by animals and creatures sprung from the mindsets of cultures and individuals. The medieval idea of animals, for example, held that each beast embodied a particular virtue or vice of human behavior. Tigers represent jealousy, elephants are symbols of chastity, eagles possess integrity, etc. Some of these animal chimera bear only a superficial resemblance to their mundane "counterparts." This dichotomy is what makes the Dreaming (especially the Far and Deep Dreaming) so dangerous. Animals simply are not always what they seem here. The medieval panther chimera, or "Pard," for example, is a gentle beast that has a breath with the sweetest scent. All animals (except the dragon, which fears the breath of the Pard) in the vicinity are "charmed" by these exhalations and unable to do anything except follow the Pard wherever it may lead (How would this charm affect pooka in animal form?). Characters traveling without a thorough understanding of the realm are in for a few nasty surprises. Dream-craft cantrips could provide some insight, but the Art does not supply all the answers. To

A storyteller should not ignore the common flora and fauna in a Dreaming chronicle set in an otherwise ethereal realm, as they can also make for interesting antagonists. It is beyond the scope of this book to provide an exhaustive list of chimerical animals to populate all of your Dream Realms. Books about animals and symbolism are also good resources, but be careful to establish a consistency for all of the denizens of a Dream Realm, unless it is a chaotic Nightmare Realm.

complicate things, chimera are changeable creatures: it's their nature. Some change when succeeding generations dream different attributes (the unicorn is a prime example: always tripping over that 20-yard horn during the Middle Ages). Some chimera are adaptable and change of their own volition.

## Dragons

Some say that dragons began as the racial memories of humanity's mammalian ancestors' encounters with dinosaurs, made flesh in the Dreaming. This origin might explain why



dragons have changed as the human brain and society evolved. Nearly every culture in human society has dragons in its Dream Realms. Of course, they also have their dragon-hunters. In recent times, chimerical dragons are smaller than they used to be, and the older ones are either dead or sleeping in the deepest cave-realms of the Dreaming. The sightings of larger dragons are few in modern times, even in areas of the Far Dreaming.

Dragons would almost be an endangered species, were it not for the dreams inspired by movies and animations. Even so, it is surprising how little chimerical dragons have changed in the past 200 years.

The dragons of the East and West are fundamentally different and have variant dispositions, powers and forms.

## Western Dragons

Western dragons come in three varieties: wurms, demi-dragons and dragons proper. Generally (but not always), these classes refer to their ascending order of cunning and intellect, as well as body-types. Wurms are wingless and legless; often, they breathe poisonous vapor or are covered in slime. They usually satisfy themselves by killing livestock, but they will eat anything that gets too close. Demi-dragons are smarter, have two legs and (usually) a pair of wings. People transformed into dragons often assume this shape. Demi-dragons, when fully grown, usually disdain simple livestock and often think of fae as a good meal. A

wyvern is an example of a demi-dragon. Dragons proper are the four-legged, fire-breathing, sit-on-a-treasure-pile-and-terrorize-maidens type we usually consider when we think of dragons. These dragons are the most dangerous and cunning of the breed, but they tend to get sluggish and sleep a lot when they get older. Note that there are exceptions to the classes above. The Midgard Serpent, for example, was so large that no one could see all of its body, and it was able to stretch around the world and bite its own tail on the few occasions it sneaked out of the Dreaming. Some dragons possess unusual forms and powers, such as the Amerindian Weewilmekq, a giant, sluglike worm with rows of teeth and a powerful, parasitic sucker for a mouth; or the Garguille, a worm that expelled a tidal flood of water from its gullet to drown its victims.

Attributes: These Attributes are for adult dragons. Very old or very young dragons need their stats adjusted accordingly.

## Wurm

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Glamour: 8, Willpower: 5

Health Levels: OK(x3), -1(x3), -2(x3), -5(x4)

Attack: Bite/8 dice, Constrict/5 dice

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Stealth 3 (in water or covering)

Redes: Armor (3 points), Gulp, Healing (sometimes), Venom

## Demi-Dragon

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 6, Stamina 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Glamour: 9, Willpower: 7

Health Levels: OK(x4), -1(x4), -2(x4), -5(x4)

Attack: Bite/5 dice, Claw/6 dice, Tail/4 dice (opponents from the rear, or if the demi-dragon is aloft)

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Dream-Lore 2, Treasure-Lore 4 (information on its own hoard)

Redes: Armor (4 points), Breath, Flight, Glamour Pact, Scuttle (2 levels)

## Dragon

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 4

Glamour: 10, Willpower: 10

Health Levels: OK(x5), -1(x5), -2(x6), -5(x5)

Attack: Bite/6 dice, Claw/6 dice, Tail/3 dice (opponents from the rear, or if the dragon is aloft)

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 6, Dodge 3, Dream-Lore 4, Enigmas 5, Intimidation 3, Kenning 4, Mage-Lore 3, Treasure-Lore 5

Redes: Armor (4 points), Breath, Befuddle (victim must look into dragon's eyes), Enchantment, Fear, Flight, Glamour Pact, Gulp (A few of the oldest dragons have Archetype: 2 levels)

Banes: Vulnerable Spot







## Eastern Dragons

When the inhabitants of the Middle Kingdom first looked up and saw rain fall from the sky or the waters of the ocean crash against the coastal shelf, into their dreams flew divine beings responsible for these aspects of nature. In such dreams, the Chinese dragons took form. The Dreamers imagined the dragons with such loving detail that these chimera can still occasionally break through the curtain of Banality to manifest before humans. Indeed, in the distant past, eastern dragons took human mates, and many fae can claim their descent from these chimera.

As befits a being of divine nature, a Chinese dragon takes 3,000 years to mature fully from its large, gemlike egg. A classic adult Chinese dragon has the head of a camel, a demon's eyes, stag-horns, a snakelike neck, and the belly of a clam. It has four feet like a tiger's, but with eagle-claws. The oldest have wings, but all can fly.

There are many kinds of eastern dragon, from the ocean-dwelling *wang lung*, or fire dragon, to the six-legged, two-bodied *t'ao t'ieh*, whose huge, gluttonous appetites put western dragons to shame. Listed below is the classic *kioh-lung*, or adult Chinese dragon.

Again, these beings were treated as celestial divinities. While they could occasionally be malevolent, they hardly fit the same bill as the solitary western maiden-eating monster. Many *kioh-lung* live in cloud palaces, complete with a huge temple and a village of loyal worshipers. Treasure-seeking adventurers are likely to get more than they bargained for if

they tangle with these beings. While they are not generally fond of western fae or nunnehi, *kioh-lung* recognize respect when it is given and protect honorable eastern fae with a vengeance, as some of these fae likely are their descendants.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 8, Stamina 4, Charisma 6, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 4  
Glamour: 10, Willpower: 9

Health Levels: OK(x4), -1(x4), -2(x4), -5(x5)

Attack: Bite/7 dice, Claw/5 dice, Tail/4 dice

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Dream-Lore 4, Enigmas 4, Etiquette 2, Intimidation 3, Kenning 3, Leadership 4, Lore (Chinese) 6

Redes: Armor (4 points), Dreamform (can become solid at will; costs 3 Glamour to shift between solid and Dreamform), Enchantment, Flight, Glamour Pact, Gulp, Shape Shift (most often humans; dragon must be in solid form when shapeshifting)

## Beasties

### Hybrids

Creatures possessing physical attributes of animals and humans or several different animals are collectively called hybrids. There are some very old hybrid races, some of them formed from dreams involving the taboo of matings between humans and animals. Centaurs, harpies and the lamia are all hybrids.





In general, hybrids are more bestial than human. Controlled by their bestial instincts, even human hybrids are rarely in the mood to talk. The animal hybrids, especially the chimaera, are extremely ferocious, and they communicate only if they are able and if there is reason to do so.

Hybrids are also created through the tender ministrations of enchanters (see below). These "artificial" hybrids are the most dangerous of all, because they usually have been forced into their present state and are not happy about it. Chimaera originally were artificial hybrids who adapted to some realms in the Far Dreaming. Obviously, there are infinite possibilities for hybrid-creation. The body-parts of any two or more creatures could make a hybrid. Some of these hybrids are not viable and do not last long in the Dreaming. In creating a hybrid, Storytellers should give thought to what is considered the "bestial nature" of the animal(s) composing the hybrid. For example, a hybrid with the body of a man and the head of an asp will be incredibly fast — and cunning. While this hybrid's goal may be to have one of the characters for lunch, it would probably employ deception before it tried open assault. It might attempt to convince the characters that it is a victim of some evil sorcery, and that, to cure the curse, it needs a magical gem at the bottom of a well. Would the characters please help (heh heh heh)?

Some hybrids are social creatures, in spite of their bestial proclivities. Even though they constantly argue and brawl among themselves, the centaurs tend to stick together. Again, the measure of their sociability is dependent upon their animal natures (hybrid bee-types are really tight, but hybrid scorpions attack each other on sight). Some hybrids are sterile and unable to reproduce.

Recognizing the animal natures of satyrs and pooka, many hybrids (especially centaurs) are more kindly disposed toward these Kithain "brethren" (-1 to -2 difficulty on all Social actions).

Storytellers could also play an interesting "bait-and-switch" with the players by introducing hybrids that closely resemble a type of shapeshifter, and then watch suppositions fly apart when a real shapeshifter enters the story.

Hybrid creation is the same as that for any other chimera. There are certain basic similarities, however:

Attributes: Strength 2-4, Dexterity 2-4, Stamina 3-4, Charisma 0-1, Manipulation 0-3, Appearance 0-2, Perception 1-3, Intelligence 0-3, Wits 2-4

Glamour: 5-6, Willpower: 2-6

Health Levels: OK(x2-x3), -1(x2-x4), -2(x2-x3), -5(x1-x2)

Attack: Variable, usually Strength +2 if a weapon, or 5 dice

Talents: Alertness 3-4, Athletics 3, Brawl 3-4, Dodge 0-3, Melee 0-3, Stealth 0-2, Survival 3

Redes: Highly dependent upon animal body-types. Possibilities include Armor (2 points), Breath, Difficulty Reduction (2 points), Flight, Venom, Weapon: mandibles, claws, etc. (+2 damage)

## CENTAURS

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Glamour: 5, Willpower: 4

Health Levels: OK(x2), -1(x2), -2(x2), -5

Attack: Club/Strength +2, Hooves/6 dice (must rear on 2 legs; opponent gains -1 difficulty for next attack)

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Melee 3, Survival 3

Redes: Difficulty Reduction (-2 for all rolls involving galloping or running), Entrancement (for hunters or others crossing the centaur's tracks; victim becomes obsessed with tracking down the centaur; one Willpower roll to resist possible per hour), Riasradh (+2)

Banes: Enmity (Amazons)

## Chimaera

The chimaera is a chimera with a really bad temper. Originally an artificial hybrid, it somehow managed to adapt and reproduce in a few Dream Realms (which is amazing, given that chimaeras tend to attack anything, even each other). It possesses the body of a goat, the forelegs of a lion and the tail of a dragon, and three corresponding heads. While it is intelligent and capable of speech, it generally communicates only if absolutely necessary.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

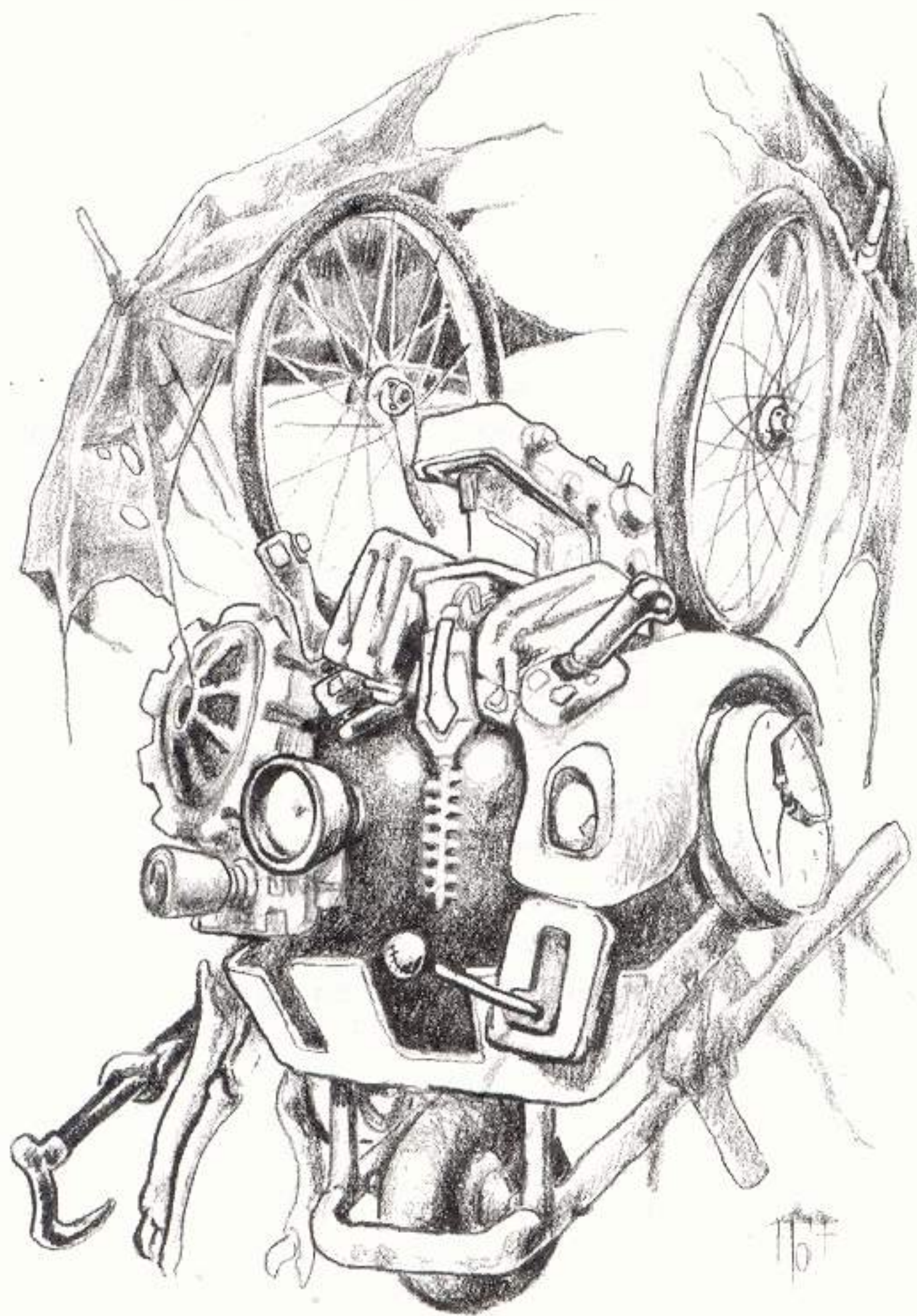
Glamour: 5, Willpower: 5

Health Levels: OK(x3), -1(x2), -2(x3), -5(x2)

Attack: Bite/6 dice, Claw/5 dice, Tail/4 dice (for opponents from the rear)







Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Survival 2

Redes: Breath, Riastradh (+4, only against sidhe, nobility and Seelie trolls)

## Machine-Beast

The creature known as the machine-beast scavenges the technological realms of the Dreaming to find a suitable shell for its outer protection, much in the same way as certain mundane crabs do. However, this being can graft machines onto its body and utilize them as working devices. Thus, machine-beasts can have chainsaw appendages or inhabit the bodies of cars and travel at incredible speeds.

Machine-beasts would be a worse problem than they are except for two reasons. First, there are few technological realms in the Dreaming. While many creatures dream of technology, Glamour does not easily affix itself to these dreams. Second, machine-beasts are not intelligent. While a creature that attaches a chainsaw to itself as an appendage could be extraordinarily dangerous, the machine-beast is too stupid to exploit its own nature. It could just as easily attach a rack of toasters to itself. The few beasts that have dangerous appendages were merely lucky in their scavenging finds, rather than calculating.

Machine-beasts are territorial and attack anything encroaching upon their territory (including other machine beasts). The size of one's territory depends upon the size of the individual creature.

Interlopers who leave a beast's territory are generally not pursued, unless the trespassers possess a piece of machinery (the more complicated a device's movable parts, the more attractive it is to the beast). The beasts eat rust, which they absorb from the accumulated oxidation on the machines attached to their bodies. It is doubtful whether the beasts possess mouths, but they do have eyes well protected by their machine-armor.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Glamour: 6, Willpower: 3

Health Levels: OK(x5), -1(x3), -2(x2), -3, -5(x4)

Attack: Variable, depending upon the machinery integrated. Assume anything from electric scissors (2 dice), to high-voltage transformers (9 dice electrical damage, not transmittable to the beast)

Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Survival 3

Redes: Armor (2-7 levels), Scuttle (if grafted onto a locomotive device)

Banes: Vulnerable Spot (eyes; if the attacker strikes this spot, the beast is blinded)

## Peryton

Perytons are natural hybrids that disappeared into the Far Dreaming before the fall of the Roman Empire. How they made the journey is unknown. In ancient times, perytons were thought to be the spirits of travelers who died far from their homes or their







gods. Of course, this explanation is nonsense, but the Dreaming is a place where nonsense thrives. The feathers of the peryton are brilliant cerulean blue, alternating with deep green, overlaid with an emerald iridescence. They possess the head, legs, size and antlers of a deer and the body and wings of a bird. Instead of a regular shadow, they cast the shadow of a human.

Perytons hate humans, but they attack only the one person who can return their true shadow. This unfortunate individual a peryton battles to the death. During the day, perytons tend to soar at dizzying heights around the chimerical ruins of ancient cities and battlefields. If a peryton sees the shadow of a wandering traveler that matches its own, it swoops down to fight.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Wits 3

Glamour: 5, Willpower: 4

Health Levels: OK(x3), -1(x2), -2(x2), -5

Attack: Claw/4 dice, Antlers/6 dice

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 3

Redes: Difficulty Reduction (-1 for all airborne attacks with claws; -2 for dodges), Flight, Scuttle

Banes: Enmity (humans)

## Afrit

Afrits are slender creatures with humanoid limbs and elongated faces. Their emaciated features belie their immense strength and speed. The skin of an afrit is dark and rough, with the same

consistency and texture as tree bark. They sport huge bat-wings and think of torture and combat as great pastimes. Their mouths are inhumanly small, fit only for playing fae-bone pipes that afrits use to entrance potential victims. A few hardy souls who have managed to overwhelm an afrit and take its pipe away could use this rede, but only if they could imitate the afrit's song (i.e., the character must have Performance 3 or greater and be familiar with Arabian or African love songs of the 12th to 15th centuries). Afrits, inspired by Arabian lore, are aggressive and fight for the sheer joy of combat. They do not "play fair," and they see nothing wrong with fighting opponents at overwhelming odds. If their side has fewer numbers, they retreat to find more of their kind to continue the fight. They typically wear little more than a pair of clogs, a loincloth and a rope-belt to hold their pipe.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Glamour: 5, Willpower: 4

Health Levels: OK(x3), -1, -2(x2), -3, -5(x2)

Attack: Scimitar (Strength +4)

Talents: Acrobatics 2, Alertness 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Melee 3, Arabian Lore (fae) 3

Redes: Difficulty Reduction (-2 for all rolls involving flight-based dodges), Entrancement, Flight, Armor (2 points)

Banes: Enmity (all fae), Token (flute for entrancement)

## Rakshasas





These beings are the shapeshifting demons of Indian mythology. They have no true form; whatever shape they take for their victims is their actual body. However, they possess a type of Dreamform claws that are invisible until used. Rakshasas rip their victims to shreds, but do not feed upon flesh. Instead, they take their nourishment from the escaping life-force of the dead. The rakshasa of myth could be killed by thrusting a bone from a virtuous holy-man into the monster's heart. However, in the Dreaming, rakshasas are easier to combat: When they take sufficient damage, they disincorporate, as do any other chimera.

A rakshasa assumes the form of a person or being its victim trusts most. The rakshasa takes advantage of the victim's confusion to come close and tear her apart. Rumors suggest that the rakshasa also gains some of its victims' memories by feeding upon their life-force, but this remains conjectural. The power of a rakshasa is ineffective against anyone possessing True Faith or Iron Will merits.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

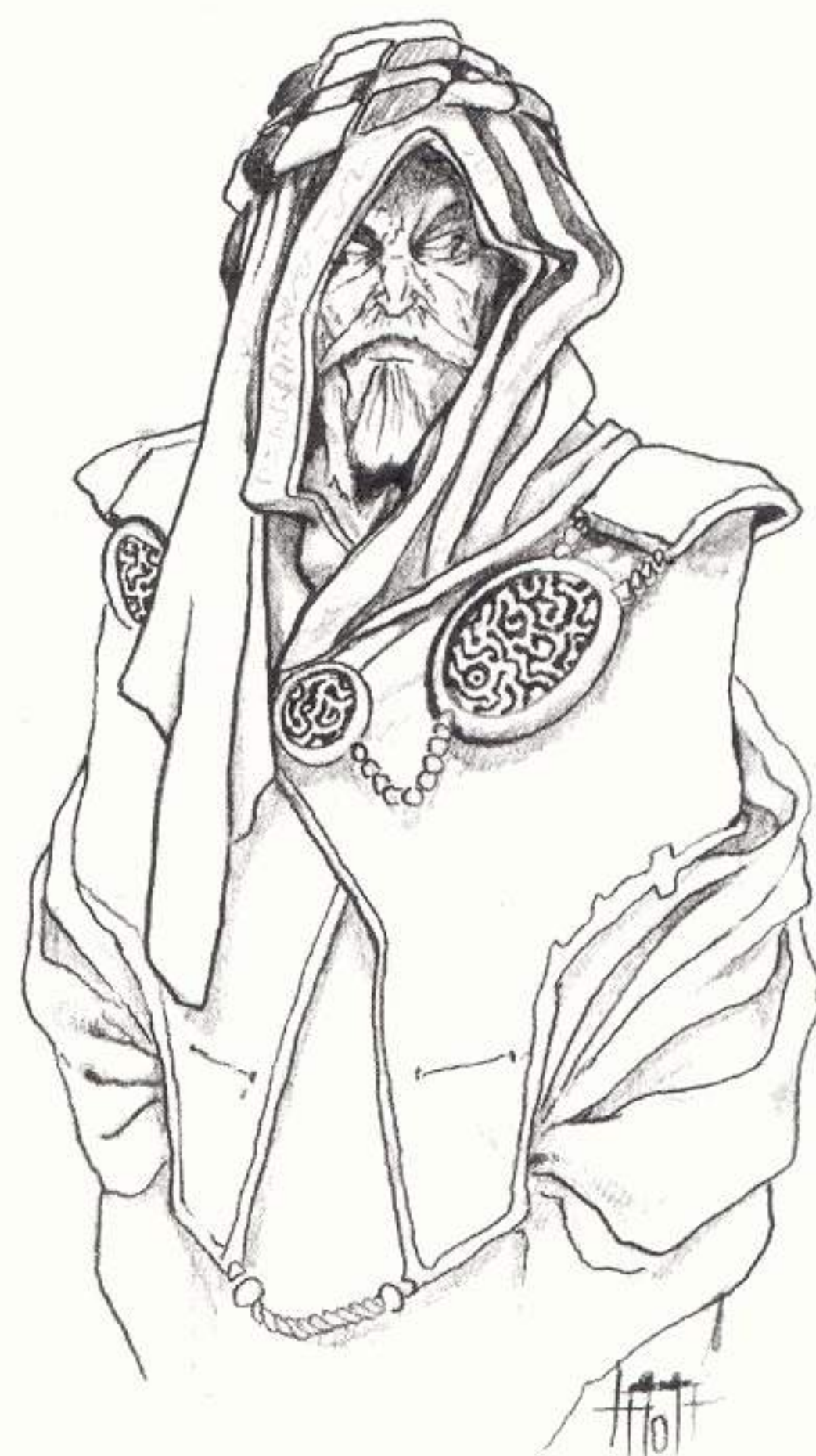
Glamour: 6, Willpower: 7

Health Levels: OK(x3), -1(x2), -2, -5(x3)

Attack: Claws/7 dice

Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Subterfuge 4, Survival 3

Redes: Scuttle, Shape Shift (only to trusted friends of one victim; a rakshasa appears only when its victim is alone, or once it coaxes a victim away from her friends)



## Humans and Humanoids

### Enchanters

In mythic times, mages used their magic with less fear of backlash. Many mundanes (or "Sleepers," as mages call them) who witnessed these magical feats were inspired by what they saw. Their dreams gave birth to the enchanters.

Enchanters look like average humans (they never look like fae). They tend to be either old wise-women or mysterious, gray-cloaked men, but there was an instance of an enchanter appearing as a six-year-old (probably from the nightmares of a four-year-old who was terrorized by his older sister's scary stories). As with any human, they vary widely in desires, needs, and motivations. They can be either one's worst enemy, or the harmless old midwife in the nearby Dream Realm. Interestingly, a few enchanters possess the ability to use hedge magic (mostly Divination and Cursing; for further rules on hedge magic, see **World of Darkness: Sorcerer and Ascensions Right Hand**).

Enchanters' most potent ability is the inverted use of the Shape Shift rede. Through this ability, enchanters people the Dreaming with many strange and curious artificial hybrids. Indeed, many enchanters view this function as a sort of "higher calling" similar to faith-healing, and they can be quite artistic in their metamorphic endeavors. They might put a slug's torso on a slothful person, or they could be very subtle and morph a sweet, innocent unicorn's head onto a corrupt politician's body. Interestingly, enchanters cannot shapeshift themselves or each other.

The hybrids that enchanters make do not immediately gain any new powers or redes from the shapeshifting. As the creatures' views of themselves change, however, the power of Glamour within the Dreaming gradually works to imbue them with new abilities. Enchanters encourage their hybrid charges to "let go and allow your true nature to manifest." Because civilized behavior is often the first trait to go in the mind of an artificial hybrid, one might expect hybrids to attack their sorcerous progenitors. Such assaults seldom occur, as enchanters have a power over hybrids, and many hybrids hope to convince (cajole, blackmail, or simply beg) the enchanter to return them to their former shape.

Note that these changes affect only chimerical and fae seemings. An extra pair of ant legs shapeshifted onto a sluagh will not be noticeable to unenchanted humans. The sluagh knows they are there, however, and as his mind breaks down in the mundane world, he attempts to convince others (in the asylum) that he really is turning into an ant-animal.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Glamour: 6, Willpower: 6

Health Levels: OK, -1(x2), -2(x2), -5

Attack: By weapon

Talents (Individuals vary): Alertness 3, Animal Ken 4,





Cooking 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Enigmas 2, Herb Lore 4, Lore (fae) 2, Medicine 3

Redes: Fear (only against hybrids), Hedge Magic (up to 4 points in various disciplines; not all enchanters have this ability), Shape Shift Others. Only enchanters possess this rede. To use this power, the enchanter must prepare an herbal concoction (Herb Lore + Intelligence, difficulty 6), and get the victim to ingest it. To add to these successes, the enchanter may roll her Glamour (difficulty 7) or spend Glamour points. The victim gets one roll from his Banality (difficulty 6) to resist. Successes on this roll deduct from the enchanter's successes. From the enchanter's net successes, consult the chart below:

Successes	Changes
3	Cosmetic Changes: Color, hair, etc.
5	Minor Changes: Alteration of a small portion of the body (nose, fingers, etc.)
7	Major Changes: At least one animal part is grafted onto the body (head, torso, etc.)
9	Complete Change: Several body-parts are fused in seemingly impossible places (which is what happened to Scylla and the chimera)

Any change is permanent, unless the enchanter can be convinced to change the victim back. There are also places

within the Dreaming that remove this rede (bathing in a magical spring, powers from a legendary treasure, etc.) Obviously, the second option is good material for a quest.

Token (herbal concoction, for shapeshifting power)

## MORAE

Morae, also called nighthags, nightmares or nocturnae, wander the Flesh Realm in search of sleeping mundanes. These sleepers provide a source of Glamour and a method by which the chimera can affect the physical.

Morae can live in and alter the dreams of their victims. Since more intense and disturbing dreams create more Glamour, morae tend to cause these types of dreams. Over time, this theft of Glamour, called "riding" the victim, causes the host to weaken and die. Morae can also control the sleeping body of their hosts and make them do and say strange things.

To their hosts, morae can appear as anything they want; forms the morae have preferred in the past include black horses, medusae, or swirling dust motes. In the Dreaming, they look like terrifyingly beautiful women with tangled black hair.

Morae have variable temperaments and different agendas, but all crave the Glamour their hosts provide. Only a few seem to care for the welfare of their hosts. A few morae, called nocturnae by the Garou, delight in pushing their victims to despair and suicide. The Garou believe these morae to be "corrupted" somehow (see **Book of the Wyrms**).

Morae treat the Kithain with a wary distrust. A few enterprising Unseelie have overcome these prejudices and even forged an occasional alliance.

When a morae is outnumbered in the Dreaming, or if friends of the host manage to drive it off through wardings, the morae will seek better pastures elsewhere; with some exceptions, morae are not vindictive.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Wits 3, Intelligence 2, Perception 4

Glamour: 6, Willpower: 7

Health Levels: OK(x2), -1(x3), -2(x3), -5(x2)

Attack: By weapon (for possessed victim; in the physical world, morae has the physical stats of its victim), Claws/5 dice (in Dreaming)

Talents: Brawl 3, Dodge 2

Redes: Dreamweaving, Difficulty reduction (-2 for Possession), Enchantment, Possession (only of sleeping victim)

Banes: Warding (chalk lines across all entrances in a sleeper's bedroom)

## Kappa

The Japanese water-spirit known as a kappa is a trickster, but a very polite one. Cunning adventurers used to fool the kappa by bowing to it. In response, the kappa would return the bow, spilling the fluid from the cavity atop its head — the fluid that animates the kappa and gives it its power. Kappa no longer fall for such a cheap trick. The kappa looks like a scaly, boyish humanoid about four feet tall, with a bowl-shaped depression crowning its skull. This depression is filled with water from the creature's home.



Kappas live in bodies of water and prey upon travelers by dragging them underwater and feasting upon their entrails.

Kappa are masters of sumo wrestling. They are honorable, and often propose a wrestling match to determine whether travelers may pass safely or end up as dinner. Travelers who capture or impress a kappa may get it to heal wounded characters or teach them new skills. Also, Kappa love cucumbers. Travelers get a +2 bonus to all dice involving Social rolls if they present cucumbers as a gift to a kappa.

The kappa is very careful not to spill the water from its concavity, for any such loss



weakens it. If the fluid somehow spills or is removed, roll one die and divide by 2 (round down). The resulting number is the increased difficulty for any physical action the kappa makes. Successive rolls are cumulative. If the total cumulative rolls exceed 6, the kappa is immobilized and at the mercy of its enemies.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Glamour: 7, Willpower: 8

Health Levels: OK(x4), -1(x2), -2(x3), -5

Attack: Various wrestling joint-locks/3-6 dice, drowning (see main rules)

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 5 (With a specialization in wrestling. If using Combat, assume the kappa has 15 Maneuver points for various wrestling techniques. If not, use the Brawl score for all physical and restraining attacks, with a -1 difficulty to all grapples), Dodge 2, Instruction 3, Etiquette 3, Fishing 3, Medicine 3, Survival 2, Swimming 4

Redes: Armor (1 point), Difficulty Reduction (-1 with grapples), Healing

Banes: Vulnerable Spot (fluid atop head)

## Giants and Giant Animals

Considering the number of dreams and stories about giants and giant creatures, it is amazing that the Dreaming does not have more such denizens. Around the turn of the century, when skyscrapers began to appear in mundane cities, giants began appearing less in the Dreaming. Perhaps the Dreamers, surrounded by looming, cavernous buildings, needed fewer gigantic residents within their imagination, or perhaps the sterile environments of office buildings drove the giants deeper into the Dreaming. Who can say?

However, there are still a lot of giant humanoids and giant animals of all kinds within the Dreaming. Attempting to classify them all would take an encyclopedia. Suffice it to say that giant animals possess the same attributes as their normal-sized counterparts. Giant humans, on the other hand, are either very strong and very stupid or cunning and possess Redes (some can hurl lightning





or cause storms, while the giant Utgardaloki was proficient at illusions and befuddlement). Some humanoids have a type of deformity (the cyclops' one eye, etc.), while others are perfectly proportioned, even attractive, creatures. The Dream Realm of Brobdingnag is populated by otherwise normal giants who are so large that no traveler to the Realm has yet caught their attention: visitors are ignored or inadvertently squashed. On the other hand, the 12-foot tall, brightly painted Baseball Furies are constantly on the lookout for new balls (skulls) to use in their next game. If you aren't polite enough to give them your skull, they practice their line drive on your cranium anyway.

Giant, nonsentient animals mostly view normal-sized characters in one way: as food. Intelligent, giant-animal chimera vary in temperament and motivations. The giant talking rats of Kovallabar lend assistance to anyone in their realm who can tell a good tale about the strange, shapeshifting rat-humans, or to anybody who has a tasty morsel of food. Giant seals tolerate travelers, unless such visitors stray onto the creatures' mating grounds.

Giants come in three height categories: big (7 feet-12 feet tall), humongous (12 feet-20 feet tall), and titanic (20 feet tall or taller). Many trolls have allies among humanoid giants (+1 with Social rolls for some giants), while other giants attack trolls on sight. Giant cultures range from prehistoric (rock brothers) to the Age of Reason (Brobdingnag).

Attributes: It is not possible to categorize all giant statistics. Let your imagination be your guide. To give you a start, here are some modifiers for giants based on size.

Attribute	Big	Humongous	Titanic
Strength	+2	+3	+5
Stamina	+2	+4	+5
Health Levels:			
OK	x2	x2	x3
-1	x3	x4	x4
-2	x3	x3	x4
-5	x2	x3	x3

Attack: By weapon, claw, tooth or fang.

Talents: Mostly Alertness, Brawl, Dodge, and Melee, depending upon the level of culture (the higher their technology, the more Skills and Knowledges the humanoid giants possess).

## Wee Folk and Nevers

### Dunnies

Protectors of lost children and injured animals, dunnies nonetheless have a mischievous streak. Their favorite trick is to appear as a gentle, grazing horse that gladly accepts being mounted by a prospective rider. The dunnie then bolts away, taking the victim on the ride of her life and ultimately tossing her into the nearest manure pile. Dunnies, also called colt pixies, sometimes watch over magical groves and orchards. They like to sneak up on a trespasser to nip and annoy her until she leaves. If a dunnie fails to discourage trespassers, it departs to find some nearby allies who can be more convincing.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Glamour: 5, Willpower: 4

Health Levels: OK(x2), -1(x2), -2(x2), -5

Attack: Bite/1 die, Kick/3 dice

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 2, Kenning 1

Redes: Shape Shift (into an old woman or man or a horse)

### Oakmen

These chimera are the foreshortened, bitter spirits of felled trees (not just oaks). Oakmen live in the Near Dreaming, where each occupies the stump of a tree. They often appear as bogganish creatures with gnarled skin (a few wear red toadstools as caps). They are not happy with the fate of their parent tree and tend to take it out on anyone they can. Their favorite trick is to offer delicious food to passersby. Once the food is eaten, they transmute it into poisonous mushrooms. If this trick doesn't work, they settle for giving bad directions ("...ya cahn't git theah from heah...").

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Glamour: 4, Willpower: 3

Health Levels: OK, -1, -2(x2), -5

Attack: They generally don't, unless they can direct you into the nearest rockfall

Talents: Alertness 3, Area Knowledge 3, Athletics 1, Dodge 2,

Redes: Transmute Food





# APPENDIX

## Gathering Dreamstuff

A character who wishes to Craft or Forge a chimera must plan in advance before she goes in search of usable Dreamstuff, especially if the intended chimera is to have many redes. Suppose a nocker wishes to Forge a magical sword with Difficulty Reduction versus spiders, Healing, increased Dexterity to its user, and Scuttle. If none of the base materials are Sympathetic to the other redes, the beleaguered nocker would have to collect 12 separate components—far too many for one nocker to carry easily, and it is unlikely that anyone would find these materials all in one place. There are no convenience stores selling Dreamstuff in the Dreaming. For this reason, manynockers and boggans outfit their workplaces with large storehouses and containers of arcane materials, in anticipation of the day when they can begin their great work.

## Amount of Dreamstuff in Raw Materials

It cannot be stressed enough that the amount of Dreamstuff available in the Dreaming is subject to Storyteller discretion. If you want your chronicle to be filled to the brim with magical items, so that every Kithain household has a clay golem servant, then you should increase the numbers in the chart below. If your chronicle is in the midst of the Winter of Banality, then decrease the numbers accordingly. In the extreme cases of highly banal chronicles, many chimerical materials normally usable in Forging have little or no 'stuff in them, and legendary or scarce materials become priceless commodities, with wars fought over their ownership. The numbers below reflect the chronicle with the encroaching, but not yet arrived, Winter.

Even in a Glamour-rich chronicle, not all chimera possess

Dreamstuff. The majority of chimera in the Dreaming are incidental, composed of sleepy-dust. Dreamstuff is easy to spot (Perception + Kenning, difficulty 4), and the objects it composes give off waves of strong sensation, usually positive. Animals and other creatures are instinctively drawn to the sources of these emanations and guard them against all trespassers. Many of these animals and guardians absorb a measure of the emanated Dreamstuff into their own bodies. The 'stuff strengthens these guardians and makes them larger and more cunning than the average animal.

Before a character can harvest Dreamstuff from a chimera with suitable raw material, the Storyteller needs to determine two things:

- Is there enough material present to provide an appropriate volume for the intended chimera?
- How much Dreamstuff is available in the material?

## Volume

The Storyteller determines the volume of material needed to Craft a chimera. Damaged materials have a proportionately lessened amount of Dreamstuff in them. There are no hard-and-fast rules for this distribution, but use common sense. You could not make a chimerical castle without a huge mine's worth of material; at the other end of the scale, one average, dogwood-sized tree may be enough for only two bows. If you are not sure, use the formula below:

**12 pounds of common material = 1 volume**

Consider how this formula changes for uncommon materials: The more unusual a material is, the less that would be needed to make up one volume. A small unicorn horn weighs about 6



ounces, but it provides 2 volumes of material. To make one volume from apples, though, would require 20 pounds of fruit.

Nunnehi are more adept at harvesting Dreamstuff than other Kithain because of their intuitive understanding and use of nature.

## Amount, Scarcity and Location

The farther into the Dreaming you go, the more 'stuff there is in some elements and resources. Also, the rarer a material, the more Dreamstuff there is in it.

The Rule of Scarcity refers to how common a material is in the whole of the Dreaming, not in a given realm. Four-leaf clovers are ubiquitous in leprechaun realms, but not as common elsewhere in the Dreaming.

When a character announces that she wants to harvest Dreamstuff, secretly determine the amount of Dreamstuff available by rolling a die and consulting the charts below. If the result is a 7, the material is a "motherlode" and has 10 times as much Dreamstuff in it as it may have otherwise. If the result is a 1, go through the motions of checking the chart, but there is no harvestable Dreamstuff present in the material (it may appear to have usable Dreamstuff, but appearances can be deceiving). If the result is a 10, try not to chuckle too loudly,

for the material possesses Foolstuff.

Die	Material
1	No 'stuff available
7	10 times the normal amount of 'stuff available
10	Foolstuff!

**Detecting Foolstuff:** A nocker or boggan may make one attempt to determine if the material she has possesses Foolstuff. For a nocker or boggan character, secretly roll her Perception + Crafts, difficulty 8. If there are 4 or more successes, the character is aware of the Foolstuff. Any other result is a failure. Any other nocker or boggan may make one attempt to determine if a substance possess Foolstuff, unless a character made an attempt before she did and botched his roll. No other characters (not even nunnehi) may attempt this action.

**Harvesting the material:** The harvester rolls Dexterity + Kenning when he harvests, difficulty 7 (-1 difficulty if a nocker, boggan or nunnehi). Each success is the amount of harvestable Glamour points obtained from the material, up to the maximum amount already in the material. The maximum amount of Glamour points cannot exceed the maximum already in the material, even if the harvester rolls more successes. The excep-

## Amount of Dreamstuff

The chart below reflects the amount of chimerical points potentially available in 1 volume of a material, and later usable in creating and building chimera. The materials listed are rough examples only.

Object	Example Found in:	Near Dreaming	Far Dreaming
Synthetics	Plastic	1	0
Common Wood	Pine	2	3
Uncommon Wood	American Chestnut	2	4
Rare Wood	Treant-Wood	4	6
Food/Consumables	Appleseeds	2	3
Beer, mead, wine		2	4
Other Plant Materials	Hemp rope	2	3
Spring Water		3	3
Ocean Water		2	4
Magical Waters	Waters of Lethe	4	6
Glass		2	4
Base Metals	Copper	2	4
Precious Metals	Gold	5	7
Chimerical Iron		0	7*
Clay/Soil		1	2
Base Stone	Quartz	3	4
Semiprecious Stone	Onyx	5	6
Precious Stone	Ruby	6	8
Alchemical Stone	Philosopher's Stone	8	9
Animal Parts	Antelope-hide	1	3
Unusual Creature Parts	Centaur hooves	3	5
Legendary Creature Parts	Dragon scale	6	9
Other		3	5

\*The rarest element, found only in the Far and Deep Dreaming



tion to this rule is the Rule of Conjunction or Harvest-time, when certain materials become more potent.

The harvesting roll is not extended: If the user fails, no other attempt is possible with the material. If the user botches, not only did the harvester destroy any potential Dreamstuff in the material, but she is convinced that there is some left.

**Rule of Conjunction:** On certain days, the Dreamstuff in some materials becomes more potent. It's a good idea to harvest materials accordingly on these dates.

The Dreamstuff in the materials listed below possesses +4 chimerical points when harvested on the appropriate day. Nunnehi and Unseelie receive +6 Chimerical Points, because they are more attuned to the changing cycle of the year than are other fae.

*Samhain (October 31)* Base metals, parts of all night-birds (owls, etc.), glass, roots of uncommon trees, all herbs, night-shades (potatoes, etc.), all root vegetables (carrots, etc.), all bones, pumpkins and other autumn fruits, parts of all bats

*Yule (December 23)* All parts of evergreens (pine, fir trees, etc.), all laurels and hollies, roots of common trees, snow, base stone (shale, mica, etc.), gold, frankincense, lead, chimerical iron, blood of hibernating animals (bears, etc.), reindeer antlers

*Imbolc (February 2)* Milk and dairy products, feathers of migrating birds, spiced wine, rare white flowers, straw, phoenix feathers, dragon scale, white gold, spring water

*Vernal Equinox (March 21)* Alder branches, stems from common trees, all feathers, poppies, wildflowers, birch bark, all seeds, jade, coral, platinum, octopuses, all herbs, silver, diamond, unicorn horn

*Beltaine (May 2)* All phoenix parts, lynx fur, bark of rare trees, river water, hail, all trees struck by lightning, hooves of all rare animals, sea foam, clam shells, dragon teeth, squirrel fur, corn, volcanic glass, leaves of rare trees

*Midsummer (June 21)* Saint Johnswort, brass, cat skin, songbird bones, sassafras, ruby, obsidian, all fresh fruits, branches of common trees, heartwood of rare trees, all fish parts, honey

*Lughnasa (August 1)* Corn and all grains (all parts), wax, insect larvae, leaves of uncommon trees, heartwood of common trees, snake skin, gold, branches of rare trees, flint, charcoal from burned uncommon wood

*Mabon (September 21)* Acorns and conifer cones, leaves of common trees, owl pellets, spiderwebs, all menstrual blood from any animal, mushrooms and fungi, eyes from all common creatures, rusted metal, turtle shell, insect cocoons, uncommon bird-eggs

## FORGING OR CRAFTING THE Chimerical Item

### DURATION OR CRAFT-TIME

Once a character manages to gather all the necessary materials at her forge or workplace, she must then perform the actual crafting. Exactly how long this procedure takes is up to the Storyteller. Certain cantrips can reduce the time, but unless

the changeling has treasures that speed up the process or she uses her Arts to the same end, the amount of time needed to create an item is about as long as that for a human to craft a chimerical item's "real" counterpart. If the Kithain possesses great Strength or Stamina (4 or greater), this time is greatly reduced. Assistants can reduce this time even further.

Also, times of war tend to give a sense of urgency to the making of weapons. A normal time for forging a sword during the Hundred Years' War was a week to 10 days. At the War's height, English smithies were pumping out a sword a day.

Of course, larger projects call for greater blocks of time (and materials). An English-style castle (such as Beaumaris) could require several years and up to 500 assistants, masons, quarriers, carpenters and architects, depending upon its size. On the other hand, one person could build a shack in a few days, if the materials are handy.

## Crafting/Forging

A Kithain Crafting or Forging a chimera makes an extended roll using Dexterity + Crafts, difficulty 7. To complete the work, he needs to achieve between 6 and 28 successes, depending upon the scale of the project and the amount of reds invested in it. If the work requires more than 8 successes, switch Stamina for Dexterity after 8 successes have been reached. If the character gets no successes, some minor mishap occurs, and the time remaining increases by one-third. If he botches, not only is the project a bust, but all of the gathered materials are unusable for further projects (Basically, some catastrophe occurs. Storytellers are encouraged to be creative in describing it, and to show no mercy if the unfortunate Crafter was attempting to create an explosive item, such as a cannon.), and a portion of his workplace is damaged.

If a fae uses Saining (Naming 4), giving a True Name to the object as it is being Crafted or Forged, the item becomes incredibly potent and acquires more Glamour points to purchase additional reds or Attributes. Just what the item acquires is up to the Storyteller (keep it secret from the players). Often, items Named in this manner are forged for a specific purpose, and the Crafter should suggest the general intent of the item's creation (swords created as foes of a particular enemy often have Difficulty Reduction and extra dice for Melee or Dexterity, with an Enmity Bane against the intended foe). Some Named items have a definite sense of purpose (perhaps not intended by the Crafter), and they occasionally acquire Glamour Pact upon their creation. For this reason, a lot of seers are reluctant to Name a newly forged item. (And woe if the Named item is composed of undetected Foolstuff! The destruction of several baronies stemmed from this sort of disaster.)

As the item nears completion (within 3 successes), it is important that the future owner be present to assist in the final "tempering." He attunes the item to himself by his presence and ensures that the chimera will act in his best interests (at least, in theory; chimerical items are not completely predictable). Boggan grumbling notwithstanding, an owner ought to hang around for the project's duration if the object is a simple, one-rede affair. Otherwise, he merely needs to be at the tempering.

When tempering, a Crafter rolls Dexterity + Kenning for the



final successes, difficulty 8. If he makes the final rolls without botching, he then "tests" the object, rolling Intelligence + Enigmas. The difficulty is the number of Glamour Points invested divided by 5 (maximum of 9). If successful, the Crafter declares the project complete (unless, of course, the Crafter is a nocker, in which case the future owner needs a crowbar to pry the object away from the nocker's endless tinkering to "get it right").

In short, the rolls for making a chimera are:

**Crafting or Forging:** Dexterity + Crafts, difficulty 7, 6 - 28 successes (use Stamina after 8 successes)

**Tempering:** Dexterity + Kenning, difficulty 8

**Testing:** Intelligence + Enigmas

(Difficulty = Glamour Points ÷ 5 [maximum of 9])

## New Redes

Below are new redes to give your creatures a little more "bite." Many are usable in chimerical objects, while others are not. As always, these redes must meet with Storyteller approval before you may incorporate them into your chimera or treasures.

A few of these redes are unusable in Forged or Crafted chimera. In such cases, Glamour Point costs are marked with an asterisk. A sentient chimera possessing these abilities loses them if it is Forged into an object.

- **Animate** — Use of this rede enables the caster to move, manipulate and levitate objects at the chimera's whim. Exactly what the caster animates is dependent upon the nature of the chimera. Chimera spawned from dreams and fantasies of death can animate corpses, while nature-chimera animate rocks and branches. Chimera cannot use animate to affect living matter.

One Glamour lifts 20 pounds of material for one Melee round. Each point spent on increasing mass raises this amount "exponentially" (4 points would lift 160 pounds).

Animate used offensively attacks with the chimera's combat dice pool (use Intelligence + Melee), + 2 dice for every extra Glamour spent on mass. Of course, attacks can be dodged.

**Glamour Point Cost:** 3

**Use Cost:** 1 Glamour + 1 to increase mass exponentially; +1 Glamour to increase duration by one round (6 points would animate 160 pounds for 3 rounds, etc.)

- **Archetype** — Some chimera have the raw, essence-absorbing abilities of Glamour at their command. These chimera are called Archetypes. Archetypes can absorb the substance of other chimera into their bodies to gain greater Abilities and redes. All former memories and experiences of the victim are now part of the Archetype's. In truth, the victim is not so much eaten as reintegrated into the makeup of the Archetype. The Archetype becomes a collective being under the control of the original Archetype.

Chimera with this ability may use it only up to three times; usage depends upon the initial level of the rede purchased. After the maximum amount of redes are utilized, this rede becomes defunct, and the user is no longer considered an Archetype.

To activate this power, the Archetype must physically

grasp the victim and roll resisted Willpower. For each success achieved, the victim suffers a penalty of one Health Level and one Glamour point. When an opponent reaches zero Glamour, extra Health Levels are expended to make up for the loss. When a victim reaches zero Health Levels, he is absorbed into the matrix of the Archetype. If the victor was the original victim, she gains no benefit; the loser becomes intangible.

Once activated, the Archetype rede must run its course. If the victim manages to break away, the Archetype still spends the Glamour every turn until her form breaks apart from the loss of integrity. If she manages to reestablish contact, the process continues.

When absorbing, an Archetype gains two-thirds the initial Glamour Points of the victim. The Storyteller purchases redes, Abilities and Attributes that closely match the statistics of the original victim, from strongest to weakest. These traits combine with the Archetype's traits to form a new being. In appearance, the Archetype looks like a conglomeration of the two entities, but not overwhelmingly so. Anyone who knew the Archetype previously would still recognize the composite chimera.

Archetypes generally choose victims to whom they already bear some similarity in form or function. If the victim is not similar to the Archetype (a sweet teddy bear Archetype attempting to absorb Carmilla the Giant Tarantula, for example), the activation of the rede is considered 2 uses, and the Archetype suffers +1 difficulty to all contested Willpower rolls (an Archetype with only one use cannot absorb an unrelated chimera). This power is almost as rare as the Wyrd rede.

**Glamour Point Cost:** 10\* for one use, 15\* for two uses, and 20\* for three uses

**Use Cost:** One per turn. Once activated, the rede consumes 1 point per turn until absorption is complete or the Archetype disincorporates.

- **Breath** — Breath works similarly to Venom but affects all targets at range with a cone, cloud or line in front of the chimera's mouth (or whatever orifice the chimera uses to breathe). The discharge depends upon what kind of breath-weapon the creature possesses. For lightning, the breath expels in a line. For fire, the breath is a cone. Range is long for a line, medium for a cone and short for cloud. Victims can choose to dodge line- or cone-breath attacks or to run out of range, if they get the initiative.

Breath attacks are difficult to soak (Stamina, difficulty 7).

**Chimera Point Cost:** 5 (3, if the breath does not cause damage, such as one that causes sleep)

**Use Cost:** Damage from this rede is 3 + 1 per point of Glamour the chimera chooses to invest. All targets receive full damage.

- **Difficulty Reduction** — Certain chimera are, by design, superior at specific tasks. A sword Forged to kill perytons will strike more often against perytons than against other creatures.

Difficulty Reduction is not a true rede but a modifier. Every level reduces the difficulty of a specified task by 1. The maximum number of levels allowable for reducing the difficulty of a given task is 2.



**Chimera Point Cost:** Three for every point of difficulty reduction, maximum of 2 levels. The modified activity must be stipulated at the time of purchase and be specific (-2 difficulty for running is legal, -2 for Athletics or Dexterity is too vague).

**Use Cost:** none

- **Dreadful Gaze** — Chimera with this rede literally have looks that kill. Anything living that the chimera views while activating this power must roll Stamina + Kenning, difficulty equals the chimera's Willpower. If the victim fails to achieve at least 3 successes, he turns to stone. The effects of this transformation are different for various beings. All fae and enchanted mortals are effectively paralyzed for one hour — 10 minutes for every Banality point they possess. After this duration, they return to normal. While they are stone, victims sustain damage at half their normal rates.

Other chimera instantly lose all Health Levels and must roll to maintain their integrity. If they succeed, their intangible forms and physical stone-forms separate. As intangible-form chimera heal over time, stone-form ones slowly disintegrate into dust and completely crumble away when the incorporeal ones form new physical bodies. If they fail their initial roll, they die instantly. Healing Arts and certain elixirs can heal the physical form, and an afflicted chimera can instantly reintegrate.

This rede affects everything, including plants. The chimera does not have to meet its victim's eyes to use this rede, it merely needs to see the victim. Of course, if the chimera sees itself in a mirror or reflected surface, it is affected by its own rede. Adventurers who encounter a chimera with this power usually are forewarned by the barren waste and abundance of statues that surround the creature's territory.

**Chimera Point Cost:** 8\*

**Use Cost:** Two Glamour each use. The chimera can choose to use the rede or not. Sometimes, the unpredictable nature of Glamour causes the rede to activate anyway, even when against the chimera's wishes. Only one creature may be affected per use.

- **Dreamweaving** — This rede works only on sleeping victims in the mundane world when deployed by chimera in the Dreaming. Characters sleeping in the Dreaming are unaffected. Chimera not in the Dreaming cannot utilize this rede.

To activate Dreamweaving, the chimera merely needs to encounter a sleeping victim and gain at least one success in a Glamour roll (difficulty equals the victim's Willpower). For the remainder of the scene, the chimera can direct the course of the victim's dream in any manner she sees fit.

Successive Dreamweavings on the same victim become easier over a period of time. For every two Dreamweaving attempts, the victim suffers -1 to his Willpower dice pool to resist.

Repeated use of this rede causes the victim to gain no benefits from sleep. Over time, the target suffers permanent loss of Willpower, insanity, and death.

**Chimera Point Cost:** 4

**Use Cost:** This rede costs no Glamour to use. It is actually a limited form of Ravaging, as the chimera gains Glamour from the victim over a period of time.

- **Poof Begone** — This power is the ability to vanish at one place in the Dreaming and reappear in another. The exact distance is limited, but certain areas of the Dreaming are known to enhance this rede. Being on a trod or standing in a mushroom ring, for example, somehow increases the maximum allowable distance (by 50 feet).

A chimera must be able to see the destination of the rede. The user could poof anywhere in a house, but he would have to be able to see the house's exterior, and he could only poof to one of the outer rooms — not an interior room or the basement.

This ability is usable only in the Dreaming, even if the character possesses Wyrd.

**Chimera Point Cost:** 3

**Use Cost:** 1 Glamour

- **Entrancement** — This rede convinces the victim that the user is her friend and that the victim should go to great lengths to help the user. The victim will not endanger himself, but he will defend his new friend from all enemies. The user spends one Willpower Point and rolls her Glamour pool (difficulty equals the victim's Banality). The duration of the rede's power is a number of scenes equal to the number of successes. The chimera can cast the rede again, but at +1 difficulty for each additional casting, as the victim begins to get suspicious.

The victim must understand the chimera's language for this rede to work.

**Chimera Point Cost:** 4

**Use Cost:** 1 Willpower

- **Illusions** — The caster of this rede can change the perceptions of the target(s). This rede is similar in function to the Chicanery cantrip Fuddle, in that it can give an object or sensation a different appearance, but only one of roughly the same size or sensory input. You could make a horse appear to be a worm, but you could not make the horse invisible or appear to be a 10-story building. No special abilities are gained from this rede.

This power affects all beings within sensory range, even individuals who scry the area. However, the rede fails against anyone who possesses Perception 4 or greater, or who has some supernatural visual ability. Any victim who thinks that she is viewing an illusion gets an initial roll of Perception + Kenning, difficulty 6 (+1 for every extra Glamour invested, maximum of 9). If she gets 2 or more successes, she sees the illusion as it truly is.

The rede lasts for as long as the chimera chooses. All illusions drop when the chimera sustains 3 or more Health Levels of damage.

**Chimera Point Cost:** 3

**Use Cost:** 1 Glamour, + 1 to increase the impenetrability of an illusion

- **Riadstradh** — Riadstradh, or berserkergang, is the ability to enter into a battle-frenzy before or during combat. Wound penalties are ignored, and the chimera gains an increase in her combat dice pool. The unfortunate side effect is that the battle-crazed chimera attacks any and all creatures standing until the Riadstradh runs its course or the chimera loses all Health Levels.

The duration of Riadstradh is the Stamina of the chimera +2



for every extra Glamour point spent. After the Riadstradh, the chimera suffers 1 damage to Health Levels for every 3 turns in the frenzy (round up). This damage is fatigue and heals at the rate of one point per hour. Fatigue-damage is almost never lethal, but otherwise it has the same effect as any other wound penalties.

When purchasing Riadstradh, the chimera must specify the enemy that the rede is directed toward. The enemy listing can be as generalized as a species or Legacy, but no broader (listing sidhe is legal, but all fae is not). To activate Riadstradh, at least one representative enemy must be on the opposing side.

**Chimera Point Cost:** 3 for +1 to combat dice pool, +1 for every +1 to pool (+3 dice pool costs 5 Points)

**Use Cost:** 1 Glamour point for frenzy lasting 3 Stamina rounds, +2 for every extra Glamour point spent

• **Transmute** — This rede gives the ability to change a nonliving, organic substance into something else, or merely to alter its composition. During the Middle Ages, mortals thought fae were guilty of souring milk and poisoning wells, when spiteful chimera were the true culprits.

At the cost of 1 Glamour point, a chimera can cause food to spoil or vice versa. For 3 points, the chimera can turn nonedible plant material (such as straw) into a king's feast, or she can cause an organic material to exhibit characteristics of any other related material. She can make edible mushrooms poisonous (even if they are already eaten: see the entry for Oakmen in **Chapter Six**) or turn poisonous toad legs into tasty, edible frog legs. She can transform the finest silk into chaff or make the weakest willow as strong as oak.

For 5 points, the chimera can force radical changes upon organic materials, making wood as edible as spaghetti or giving a cotton shirt the protective qualities of wooden armor. (You always wondered how that witch created the candy house in "Hansel and Gretel," didn't you?)

This rede is usable in the mundane world; it is not necessary to possess the Wyrde rede. However, such alterations are never permanent, as Banality eats away the power of the change. Wood chips transmuted to gold coins fade back to wood, and poisonous mushrooms revert to their former state, even if already eaten. In the Dreaming, this change is permanent.

Chimera who purchase this rede must declare a "specialization" or material that this rede is limited to transmuting. A chimera can have multiple specializations but must spend Glamour points for each specialization. The specializations are water, vegetables and fruits, wood, animal meat and hide, spices, fungi, fibers, beer and wine, dairy, and other plants.

**Chimera Point Cost:** 3 per specialization

**Use Cost:** 1-5 Glamour points

## Banes

Banes are limitations or handicaps placed upon chimera. They operate in much the same manner as Flaws for characters. As with Flaws, Banes provide additional chimera points for characters to build their chimera or Forged or Crafted treasures. A maximum of 12 points of Banes may be taken per chimera.

Banes are meant to flesh out the details of a chimera's personality, not to create a chimerical war machine. Players creating chimera and intending to use Banes should first seek Storyteller approval.

• **Enmity** — The chimera has an intense dislike for a creature or thing. While it might not automatically attack, the chimera severely distrusts the object of its enmity (+3 difficulty to all Social rolls and interactions).

**Bane Points:** 2

• **Ferocious Beast** — This bane is similar to the Riadstradh rede, but the chimera has no control over its frenzies. At any unexpected moment (even in relaxed, noncombat situations), the chimera could flip out. He receives +2 to all attack rolls, and the frenzy lasts 3 rounds. However, the chimera is protected from wound penalties only at the first tier of -2 wound level. If the chimera suffers any further damage, full wound penalties take effect, even if the chimera is still berserk.

**Bane Points:** 2

• **Glamour Pact (clarification)** — This rede works to a changeling's disadvantage when placed in a chimerical object. Therefore, players who design their Forged or Crafted objects with Glamour Pact may treat it as a bane, instead of a rede.

**Bane Points:** 3 (for Forged or Crafted chimera only)

• **Jingle-Geasa** — Once a day, the chimera must sing a little song involving his True Name. He can choose to sing it quietly or in an isolated place, but the song must contain the True Name, and it must be obvious in the song that this appellation is the character's True Name (see the tale of Hop o' my Thumb or Rumpelstiltskin).

**Bane Points:** 3

• **Riddle-Game** — The chimera is bound by the ancient rules of the riddle. Any riddle or puzzle inexorably draws the chimera's attention, and he applies his full attention to its solution. He will not engage in any other activity until the riddle is solved. Furthermore, certain chimera bound by this bane must ask potential opponents to solve a riddle before they engage in combat. If the

## Riddle-Game

It is better to roleplay this game, particularly if the Storyteller is good at riddles. The riddle-game is a contest; one contestant proposes a riddle to his opponent, who must guess the answer within 3 minutes or suffer a strike. If the opponent guesses correctly, she, then, gets to pose a riddle to her opponent. The game is played for one to three strikes, depending upon how long the challenged wishes to play. The dice rolls are resisted, with the questioner rolling Intelligence + Enigmas versus his opponent's Wits + Enigmas. Every success the questioner achieves over 2 adds +1 to his opponent's difficulty, while a botch for the questioner results in a ridiculously easy riddle. If the opponent ties or obtains more resisted successes, she wins the round and becomes the new challenger.



opponent wins the riddle-game, the chimera must concede to his opponent's wishes or suffer 6 damage to Health Levels (opponents who ignore the riddle and attack the chimera can be engaged in combat with no fear of harm). All chimera bound by the riddle-game must first attempt to win the game before entering combat with a prospective opponent (most chimera with this bane possess high scores in Enigmas and Mythlore).

**Bane Points:** 2, if bound only when asked a riddle; 4, if the chimera must challenge opponents to a riddle before engaging in combat

- **Token** — The chimera needs to use a physical object or material to activate a particular rede. Often, the victim must touch or ingest the token to engage the rede's effect.

**Bane Points:** 1

- **Uncontrolled Redes** — The whimsical, unexpected nature of the Dreaming is apparent in the chimera. At inopportune moments, the chimera's redes activate, especially near areas of high Glamour. While these redes do not drain the chimera's Glamour pool, the chimera cannot direct the redes in any way.

To possess this bane, the chimera must have at least one rede.

**Bane Points:** 1 +1 per 2 redes the chimera has.

- **Vulnerable Spot** — The chimera has a faintly detectable flaw in combat that a canny opponent can use to her advantage, should she notice it. It could be a weakness in armor or a favoring of one side over the other. An opponent who searches for the flaw (he must announce that he is looking for it to roll) and achieves 3 or more successes on a Perception + Melee (or Brawl) roll, difficulty 8, detects the flaw and gains +2 dice to inflict damage and -1 difficulty to hit for the next 3 rounds.

If the opponent achieved 5 or more successes (or detects the spot supernaturally), the opponent sees an opening to inflict a mortal wound. For the next round only, she gains *double* damage dice and -2 difficulty to hit. After that round, the opponent receives the standard bonuses for perceiving the flaw.

**Bane Points:** 2

- **Warding** — The chimera is restrained by a simple ritual, charm or token. It might be a copper nail, horseshoes over a doorway or tying red ribbons in knots. If the charm is placed over a doorway or on a threshold, the chimera cannot pass through until the charm is removed. Chimera avoid such charms, and if forced to touch one, they receive a point of damage for each round of physical contact.

The charm must be specified when the bane is purchased. Iron cannot be used as a charm.

**Bane Points:** 1

## The Mists Revisited

The Mists of Forgetfulness are directly affected by the levels of Glamour and Banality residing within anyone they touch. The higher the Glamour, the less the target is swayed. The higher the Banality, the more the target is influenced. Below is a simple chart for use as a guideline. The Storyteller is encouraged to make whatever changes work best with the

Chronicle he or she has established.

The Banality of a character should be subtracted from her Glamour rating to come up with the lowest possible number. (For example: Mumpoker has a Glamour of 6 and a Banality of 3. Subtracting the Banality from the Glamour leaves him with 3 Glamour for the purposes of the chart below.) This formula sometimes means the character's Banality is the dominant trait, though seldom is it the case with changelings.

Time lapse refers to how long the effects last while the character is in the Dreaming. "Permanent" indicates that any side effects last for as long as the character remains within the Dreaming.

### Entering the Dreaming

Rating	Mist Effect	Time Lapse
10 Glamour	None	Instantaneous
9 Glamour	Clear Memory	Instantaneous
8 Glamour	Slightly Confused	1 Turn
7 Glamour	Slightly Confused	2 Turns
6 Glamour	Disoriented	3 Turns
5 Glamour	Déjà Vu	1 Scene
4 Glamour	Faint Recollection	1 Day
3 Glamour	Confused	1 Week
2 Glamour	Dazed	1 Month
1 Glamour	Awestruck	Permanent
0 Glamour	Numbed	Permanent
1 Banality	Numbed*	Permanent
2 Banality	Bitter*	Permanent
3 Banality	Frightened*	Permanent
4 Banality	Angry*	Permanent
5 Banality	Enraged*	Permanent
6 Banality	Denial*	Permanent
7 Banality	Fae-Stroked+*	Permanent
8 Banality	Demented+*	Permanent
9 Banality	Catatonic+*	Permanent
10 Banality	Forbidden	Permanent

\* These individuals may enter the Dreaming only if aided by an enchantment. Garou and mages may enter through alternate means, but they, too, are confused by what they see.

+ The Dreaming takes note of these individuals and may lash out if they do anything that could cause it harm. Others standing too near these lost souls could well be destroyed in any actions the Dreaming might deem necessary.

### Notes

The notes listed below clarify the effect the Mists have on an individual. They also explain the power needed to control that level of Banality or Glamour.

**10 Glamour:** For all intents and purposes, this person is



completely connected with the Dreaming. The Mists would simply work to protect the individual in question, as no need to defend the Mythic Realms from banal poisons is present. No changeling could ever hope to reach this level of Glamour through natural means.

**9 Glamour:** The character might suffer from very minor disorientation in the Dreaming, but already feels completely at home. Only the most powerful Kithain could hope to achieve this level of Glamour.

**8 Glamour:** Strong memories of past lives return very quickly, but the character is likely to be left confused by the influx of recollections.

**7 Glamour:** Images of past lives come back to the character, but none make any sense initially. Faces and things that should be familiar are, instead, very distracting.

**6 Glamour:** As memories of the past return, the character is left in a state of disbelief. Most of the spectacular events that occur have no influence on the character's state of mind. She remains blasé about the situation.

**5 Glamour:** The character might spend hours, if left to his own devices, trying to understand why certain aspects of the Dreaming are so familiar. Many even get cold chills, as the images of their past lives try, in vain, to resurface.

**4 Glamour:** The character remembers only faint images, with no real connection to any coherent memories.

**3 Glamour:** The character is likely to give in to her fae nature, but actually remains unaware of many changes going on in her ways of thinking and her ways of behaving.

**2 Glamour:** While fascinated by the Dreaming, the character remembers nothing of her past lives.

**1 Glamour:** The character cannot easily comprehend the nature of the Dreaming and is often distracted by the sights and sounds around him. Nothing here is familiar, and all of it is a new wonder. Most enchanted mortals are at this stage when they enter the Dreaming.

**0 Glamour:** The character is effectively unaware of the Dreaming, even if he is walking through the most amazing places It has to offer. In a short time, memories of the waking world begin to fade slightly. The character remains aware of the Flesh Realm, but has trouble remembering what it feels like to wait in a bank line or to work hard for very little profit.

**1 Banality:** See above.

**2 Banality:** The character begins to act with hostility toward anyone who comes close. Fear is the primary motivator, as the natural instinct for preservation takes over in a place the character is incapable of comprehending.

**3 Banality:** Confusion over the strange lands and the stranger people occupying them holds sway over the character. Everything is frightening and all Willpower rolls suffer a +2 Difficulty.

**4 Banality:** Confusion gives way to hatred. Most characters stuck in the Dreaming at this level are halfway to becoming Dauntain and hunting down the "demons" they see all around them.

**5 Banality:** Many characters can't stand the sights around them if they reach this level of Banality. They lash out at anything within striking range, as they battle against their own beliefs in the mundane.

**6 Banality:** The character refuses to believe anything she sees, knowing on a deep level of her soul that she must have lost her mind.

**7 Banality:** The character is completely overwhelmed by the very concept of the Dreaming. Unless attacked, he can do nothing but stare around himself, lost in thought and contemplation.

**8 Banality:** The world no longer makes sense. The character is likely to attack anything and everything, in order to make it all go away and return him to his "own world."

**9 Banality:** The character's mind gives way to unconsciousness, rather than confront the surrounding truth. The character is effectively useless as anything other than an oversized marionette.

**10 Banality:** The character is unable to enter the Dreaming. Should the character actually manage to enter the Dreaming, the Mythic Realm responds with violence, destroying this blight that attacks it so blatantly.

The Mists of Forgetfulness also affect individuals who leave the Mythic Realms. When a person leaves the Dreaming, certain aspects of their memories become obscured. Banality sets in, and many people begin to forget everything they learned while in the Dreaming. The chart opposite reflects how much is remembered by anyone who leaves the Dreaming. As before, Banality should be subtracted from Glamour, and the remaining rating should be compared to the chart.

## Dream-Craft Revisited

Dream-Craft, as originally presented in *Nobles: The Shining Host*, is a versatile Art, but one that was originally designed before the book you have in your hands was written. Certain rules have changed, and in order to ensure the usefulness of the Dream-Craft Art, revisions were necessary.

### ☉ Find the Silver Path

Trods are stable, but the Dreaming constantly fluctuates. Between the Firchlis and the often dense growth in the Mythic Realms, to keep sight of a trod is sometimes a harder task than it first seems. Additionally, many chimera use illusory Silver Paths to lure the careless away from trods and into the Dreaming, where the protection of the Silver Path has no power to repel chimera. This cantrip is very useful for telling false trods from the real thing and is sometimes helpful for locating a Silver Path when one has gone astray.

While Find the Silver Path is beneficial, the cantrip can't accurately indicate what lies ahead on a trod. The Firchlis prevents anyone from seeing farther than a changeling can see naturally.

The illusions created by chimera are often remarkably complex. If confronted by illusions, fae using this cantrip must make a Perception + Alertness roll, against a difficulty equal to the illusion-



## Leaving the Dreaming

Rating	Mist Effect	Time Lapse
10 Glamour	None	None
9 Glamour	Clear Memory	None
8 Glamour	Slight	1 Week
7 Glamour	Slight	3 Days
6 Glamour	Substantial	1 Day
5 Glamour	Faint Memories	1 Scene
4 Glamour	Dreams	1 Turn
3 Glamour	Dreams	Instantaneous
2 Glamour	Faded Dreams	Instantaneous
1 Glamour	Glimpses	Instantaneous
0 Glamour	No Memories	Instantaneous
1 Banality	Disbelief	Instantaneous
2 Banality	Confusion	Instantaneous
3 Banality		
(Or Higher)	Amnesia	Instantaneous

### Notes

Time Lapse, in this case, refers to how long the clearest memories of the Dreaming will last before they begin to fade.

**10 Glamour:** The character remembers everything about the Dreaming. However, as Banality sets in, the memories begin to fade.

**9 Glamour:** The character remembers most of what happened in the Dreaming.

**8 Glamour:** Strong memories of everything that occurred exist, but they fade in time or become confused.

**7 Glamour:** Strong memories still exist, but disbelief begins to set in. Whether or not the character remembers the events, they begin to take on a dreamlike quality.

**6 Glamour:** Most of the finer details no longer come to light for the character. Past lives begin to fade, and only the most significant events remain with the character.

**5 Glamour:** The character begins to lose even the

strongest memories and recalls only the faintest details. Travels through the Dreaming seem less substantial than the waking world and are often thought of as little more than a dream.

**4 Glamour:** Past associations brought to light in the Dreaming become irrelevant. Even the most important events and revelations seem trivial.

**3 Glamour:** The events that took place in the Dreaming are still real for the character, but the memories are too faded. Something happened, but the character couldn't tell anyone what that something was.

**2 Glamour:** It was a lovely dream, but the character remembers nothing more than having had a dream that was pleasant (or horrific, as the case may be).

**1 Glamour:** The character starts wondering just where the last few days went. Nothing substantial can be remembered, beyond whose company the character shared during that time.

**0 Glamour:** Full-scale amnesia. The character has no idea that anything unusual has occurred, and he couldn't explain to anyone why he didn't show up at work. While he has no memories, the character is certain that everything is okay anyway. Chances are, the character simply believes he had a bad head cold or was exhausted and in need of rest.

**1 Banality:** Time is missing, and the character begins to wonder if, perhaps, there's some mental aberration or nervous disorder that could have made her forget the past few days.

**2 Banality:** If questioned about why the last few days of memory are a blank, the character is likely to seek psychological help. A few disturbing images might come to mind if the character concentrates and really struggles to remember what happened.

**3 Banality or higher:** There are no memories at all of what happened in the Dreaming. The very concept of such a place does not fit into the character's accepted views of the world, and the notion of elves or fairies is absolutely ridiculous.

crafters' Glamour, in order to determine where the true trod is.

**System:** In most cases, the Realm Fae ••••• (Dweomer of Glamour) is used in attempts to find the Silver Path, though creative changelings certainly find uses for other Realms as well.

The number of successes indicates the range of the cantrip, regardless of the Realm being employed.

1 Success — Can detect target within a few yards.

2 Successes — Can detect target within 100 feet.

3 successes — Can detect target within 100 yards.

4 Successes — Can detect target within 1,000 feet.

5 Successes — Can detect target within a mile.

### ☞☞ The Merry Dance

The Firchlis is a powerful force within the Mythic Realms.

The Dreaming is constantly changing, and the Firchlis is a key source of that change. Skilled fae can, with concentration and preparation, influence the changes that the Firchlis brings. This cantrip is always a risky proposition, as a botched roll is almost certain to bring disaster.

**System:** The Realm Fae ••••• (Dweomer of Glamour) is almost always used when casting this cantrip.

The number of successes indicates the range and duration of the cantrip, regardless of the Realm being employed.

1 Success — Can influence the Firchlis in your immediate area, within a few feet, for one turn. Only very minor alterations are possible. (Can lessen or increase the intensity of one aspect of the newly altered surroundings.)

2 Successes — Can influence the Firchlis within line of sight, for one turn. (Can lessen or increase the intensity of two



aspects of the newly altered surroundings.)

3 successes — Can influence the Firchlis within one mile, for one scene. (Can lessen or increase the intensity of three aspects of the newly altered surroundings.)

4 Successes — Can alter the type of Dream Realm that appears when the Firchlis is done with the changes it brings. (Can modify the moods of the arriving chimera or dictate the weather that arrives with the Firchlis.)

5 Successes — Can radically change the arriving Dream Realm until the next Firchlis passes through. (Can cause a Nightmare Realm, Dream Realm, desired landscape or certain type of chimera to appear. Note, however, that the chimera are still independent creatures, and any negotiations with them must be handled in the usual fashion.)

### ⦿⦿⦿ Anchor

With this cantrip, a changeling can “solidify” the Dreaming to a certain degree, which allows her to establish a permanent fortress within the Mythic Realm. The number of successes indicates how stable the location is, as well as how strongly the location is tied to the local trod. As the changeling must anchor the newly created fortress to the Shining Path, a certain element of protection against chimera and the Thallain is granted. The “fortress” may be of any shape the changeling wants, provided he can skillfully sculpt the Dreamstuff.

**System:** Although most items anchored in the Dreaming are made of chimerical materials, the nature of the item determines the Realm needed. Thus, if a signpost were to be anchored, Prop might be used.

The number of successes indicates the size of the fortress, the strength of the fortress and its proximity to the trod to which the fortress is anchored.

1 Success — Closet-sized barrier area giving only the barest protection (+1 difficulty for attacking forces); must be in contact with the trod.

2 Successes — Apartment-sized barrier allowing a +2 difficulty for attacking forces; must be within a dozen feet of the trod.

3 Successes — Cottage-sized barrier, allowing a +2 difficulty for attacking forces; must be within a dozen yards of the trod.

4 Successes — Mansion-sized barrier, allowing +3 difficulty for attacking forces; must be within 100 feet of the trod.

5 Successes — Castle-sized barrier, allowing +3 difficulty for attacking forces; must be within 300 feet of the trod.

### ⦿⦿⦿⦿ Dream-Riding

This cantrip allows a changeling to interact with a mortal dream while the Kithain is in the Dreaming. It is not always a wise

thing to do, as the Kithain's actions can cause bizarre alterations to the dream itself. While interaction is possible, actual control of the dream is not. Using this cantrip in the waking world offers changelings the chance to “ride” a mortal's dreams into the Dreaming. However, such actions almost never leave the character anywhere near a trod, and nearly always leave her at the mercy of the local chimera. The character has no control over where the Dream-Ride takes her within the Dreaming.

**System:** The appropriate level of the Actor Realm must always be used when casting this cantrip.

The number of successes indicates the level of influence.

1 Success — Can change target in subtle ways, such as increasing emotions or softening textures, etc.

2 Successes — Can hold active conversations with the chimera in the dream and participate on a verbal level.

3 Successes — Can touch and interact with the dream, which allows for manipulation.

4 Successes — Can remove aspects of the dream or alter them in radical ways.

5 Successes — Can reshape the dream, at the risk of whatever consequences such action creates.

### ⦿⦿⦿⦿⦿ Dream Weaving

Dream Weaving is a powerful cantrip that allows the fae literally to create a chimerical structure or entity from Dreamstuff. The cantrip allows the changeling to create a chimerical home, a forest or even a chimera to suit her needs. Despite the power of this cantrip, few use it save in dire circumstances, as it's far too easy for a chimera to break free of its creator's will and establish its own existence within the Dreaming. Each use of the Dream Weaving cantrip costs 2 Permanent Glamour, but the Glamour is easily replaced, as Dream Weaving works only within the Mythic Realms. The Realm of this Cantrip determines the maximum size of the chimerical creation.

**System:** The nature of the object to be created determines the Realm needed: To create a tree, the Nature Realm would be appropriate, while the creation of a suit of clothes would require Prop.

The number of successes indicates the strength and durability of the creation.

1 Success — Strength of a ten-year-old mortal; A rickety old shack

2 Successes — Strength of an adult mortal; A well-built trailer home

3 successes — Strength of a small horse; A well-built home

4 Successes — Strength of a Clydesdale; A good vault

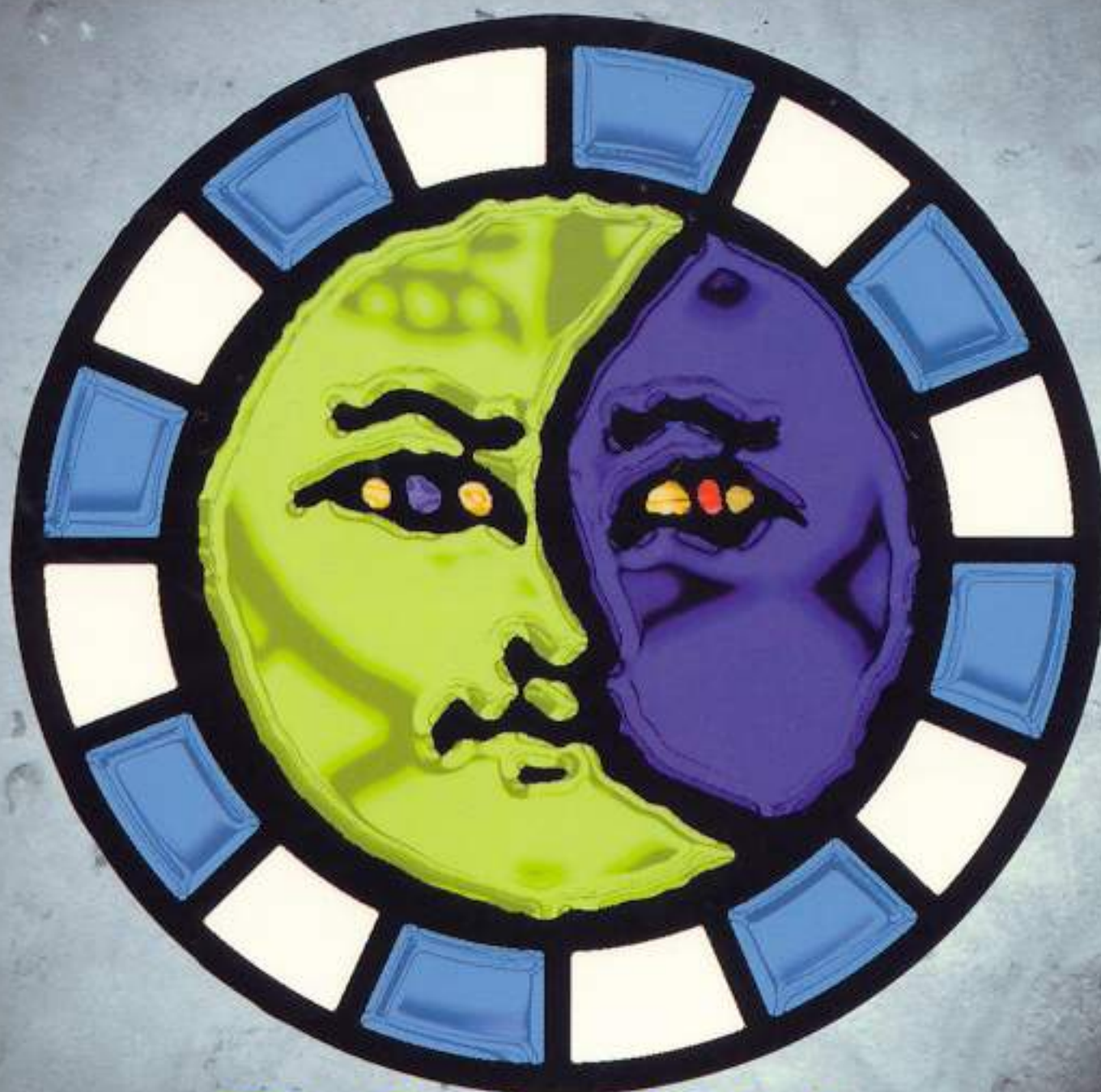
5 Successes — Strength of a team of Clydesdales; Fort Knox



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